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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

For the Christian Observer.

REASONS FOR ATTACHMENT TO THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

IN a period, like the present, of innovation and speculation—when what is venerable and approved too often, for that very reason, becomes suspected, and when it requires considerable firmness to stand the charge of prejudice and bigotry, with which those who hold fast the “good old way” are not unfrequently assailed—it becomes the duty of every individual to be able to give a reason, not only generally for “the hope that is in him” as a Christian, but also for his adherence and attachment to that particular church, of which he professes himself a member. I am conscious that there is nothing of novelty in the following survey of reasons for attachment to the Church of England; but I have thrown them together, in the hope that considerations which have proved satisfactory to my own mind may not be without their effect on the minds of others, and under the idea that it conduces in no common degree to comfort and usefulness, to be fully persuaded that our connexion with the church is not a matter of habit, or of authority, but founded on a conviction that there are substantial grounds of preference for our choice.

It is almost superfluous to remark, that in no human institution can we expect perfection: our grounds of preference must, therefore, be principally founded on comparison, as

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taken with other churches, or with the disadvantages that would arise from a change: and it is chiefly to the danger and disposition of the present day—which is not that of preferring to the church any old and existing mode of dissent, but of attempting to strike out a new and, as it is supposed, a purer and more scriptural mode of worship—that the following remarks are directed.

By the young and inexperienced in religion, the blemishes of existing establishments are so keenly described, while their advantages are so little understood; the yet untried evils of separation are so little apprehended; the sin of schism—of leaving the bosom of a church, blessed of God through a series of many generations—is so inadequately considered; there is so much of what is congenial to the remaining sinfulness of the heart, in the excitement, the opposition, the misrepresentation, which are to be encountered, and parried, and disregarded, in the progress of a step of this kind; that while it is quite obvious to all around, that if not a desire to attract notice, at least an undue self-confidence and contempt of the judgment of others, is leading the subjects of the experiment into error, they appear to themselves to be actuated solely by a conscientious desire for truth, and by a regard for our Saviour’s injunction, “Call no man master, upon earth.” The experience of a few years will probably teach them, when too late, that influence and opportunities of usefulness, never to be re-

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covered, have been lost; occasions of offence, never to be removed, have been given, in the vain attempt after a perfection and purity of doctrine and discipline unattainable in this world, in whatever quarter or connexion it may be sought.

The purpose of a church is to afford the means of edification to her spiritual members, and of instruction and conversion to those who are her members only by outward profession. It cannot be denied, that the Church of England effects both; and in a manner, as I conceive, better calculated to promote humility of heart and growth in religion, than any other communion: for in it the Christian grows up into Christ with less observation and human excitement than in most other churches. From the very constitution of dissenting communities, eminent piety procures notice and advancement; those who are remarkable for their attainments in religion, obtain on that account respect and influence; and while the human heart remains what, ever since the Fall of Adam, it has been, is it to be wondered at if, especially with the young convert, pride and self-complacency should begin to spring up with luxuriance in this genial sunshine? It has accordingly been often remarked by clergymen respecting those of whom they had hoped well, that an exchange of the meekness and lowliness of the Christian character, for a greater or less degree of spiritual pride and presumption, has been a frequent result of the transition from the obscure station occupied in their own church, to the more conspicuous one to which they were raised, in some smaller and more exclusive community.

It is with me a circumstance of no inconsiderable weight on this question, that God has been pleased to place our church in the exalted station which she at present occupies; a fact, the more remarkable, because on looking back at the history of that church, and reviewing the many

scenes of persecution in which she has been concerned, we should scarcely, reasoning without a knowledge of the issue, have expected to find such a result. That high station she must either retain or lose. If she retain it, and continue, as God in his providence has hitherto constituted her, the great medium of instruction to the people at large, is it not the duty of all who desire to retain the blessings of a scriptural ministry, to strengthen her by their prayers and attendance? If she lose it, what confusions, jealousies, and separations, may not ensue? How much of all that is contrary to what is recorded of the infant church, in Acts ix. 31. when "the churches had rest, and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied!" Rest, Paley remarks, is the enjoyment of age; and, as in natural, so in spiritual things, the blessings of peace, of stillness, of leisure to commune with our own heart, are seldom valued as they deserve to be by the young Christian. It is not *within*, but without and around him, that his fervent spirit usually desires to exert itself. Little aware of the extent of Christian holiness, of that world within, as well as without, which is to be denied and mortified; of that deceitfulness of the heart, doctrinally assented to, but very little understood in the early stages of a religious progress; he looks around him for some theatre on which to exhibit his spiritual strength, and to try his newly acquired weapons.

But it may be objected, that the inquiries which terminate in secession, are not entered upon from the love of controversy or novelty, but are forced, as it were, upon the mind; and if conscience protest against a practice as unscriptural, is not her voice to be listened to? I reply: Satan may assume the appearance of an angel of light: we should therefore beware lest he beguile us by his subtlety: we should examine well our

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motives. May no secret bias toward individuals, who may have taken this step before us—no latent dissatisfaction with religious advantages, perhaps inferior to those formerly possessed, influence our mind? Have experience, observation, an acquaintance with the devices of Satan, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts, qualified us to determine upon a question not always of easy decision, but in which conflicting duties, and apparently counter injunctions, render calmness of feeling, clearness of judgment, a single eye to the will of God, and an implicit dependence on Divine direction, necessary, in order to make a right choice? Is it likely that these should be the qualifications of youth and inexperience? Are they not almost exclusively the attainments of the tried and matured Christian? And yet, if they are indispensably requisite to form a right judgment on the question, is not the want of them in itself an imperative reason for delay? Can the advantages to be obtained, even in a purer form of worship, compensate for the anxieties and offences occasioned by a separation? Can a church, in which have been nurtured and edified some of the holiest men that ever existed—our Hookers, our Herberts, our Leightons, our Beveridges—really be essentially and fundamentally in error, so as to render necessary a separation from it, in the face of the continual exhortations to unity and peace with which the Scriptures abound? If the energies of our renewed nature, instead of being directed to the mere circumstantials and machinery of religion, were duly intent on bringing every thought into captivity to the Gospel of Christ, and crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, how little time or inclination would be left for doubtful disputations; how much more should we adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour; how much greater peace

should we enjoy with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Again, if we look at those who, in our own times, have thought a separation from the church necessary, do we see such an increase of usefulness, of peace, and of charity, as to encourage us to follow their examples? Do not too many, on the contrary, lamentably correspond to the Apostle's expression, "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth?" Do we not see too many fluctuating, and disunited among themselves? as, indeed, must ever be the case when men will yield nothing for the sake of peace, and assume to themselves the right of acting upon their own exclusive judgment. Yet, this is too often the state for which we are required to give up the peace, and order, and security, the silent growth, and tranquil beauty, of our Zion; a state, the tendency of which we may learn from the terms in which it is hailed by an acute, though unhappily, free-thinking writer,* who speaks with delight of an æra, "free from every mixture of absurdity, imposture, and fanaticism; when the teachers of each little sect, finding themselves almost alone, would be obliged to respect those of almost every other sect, and the concessions which they would mutually find it both agreeable and convenient to make to one another, might, in time, probably reduce the doctrine of the greater part of them, to that pure and rational religion, such as wise men have, in all ages of the world, wished to see established; but such as positive law has never yet established, and probably never will establish in any country. Because, with regard to religion, positive law always has been, and probably always will be, more or less influenced by popular superstition and enthusiasm. This plan of ec-

* Adam Smith, Vol. III. book v. chap. I.

clesiastical government, or, more properly speaking, of no ecclesiastical government, was what the sect called Independents—a sect, no doubt, of very wild enthusiasts—proposed to establish in England, towards the end of the civil war. If it had been established, though of a very unphilosophical origin, it would probably, by this time, have been productive of the most philosophical good temper and moderation, with regard to every sort of religious principle!”

But, are our reasons for attachment to the church only the negative ones of its being established, and of the evils that would result from a separation? Far from it. Not only is our judgment convinced, but our affections are secured. We feel a filial veneration for the formularies which we have so often used with comfort and advantage: we love to pray in the words in which our forefathers prayed, and in which so many fellow-worshippers are still calling “on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours.” Nor is this mere bigotry, but the natural, and in this instance beneficial, effect of the principle of association inherent in the human mind. “I never enter a Gothic church,” says the late Mr. Cecil, “without feeling myself impressed with something of this idea: Within these walls have been resounded for centuries by successive generations. Thou art the King of glory, O Christ.” The fervency with which the soul may have accompanied an extempore prayer, can with difficulty be retraced in subsequent meditation: but a liturgy affords facilities for embodying and recalling the impressions of our happier moments: its words are enriched to aged Christians, by being the representatives of their past experience; many delightful records are associated with them of hours when those words softened and soothed their hearts. In a liturgical form

of worship, there is also less dependence upon man, and more upon the Spirit of God in helping our infirmities, than in extempore prayer; and if there are occasions when the adaptation of which extempore prayer admits, is desirable, a liturgy has advantages which, on the whole, greatly overbalance this partial convenience. It serves as a guard against the danger of what may be called praying to the times; and yet so capable is it, from that comprehensiveness of expression sometimes objected to, of application to individual feelings and wants, that I have often, when entering into the church service with a mind pre-occupied by peculiar circumstances, been unexpectedly touched with the unpremeditated suitableness of some part of it to the subject which engaged me, and felt it to be “meet for all hours, and every mood of man.” And while it brings back the mind to those spiritual blessings which need to be petitioned for by all Christians, at all times, it does it in reality in a manner less formal than could be accomplished by any other mode; for the formality of a form of prayer, where the same blessings are repeatedly to be supplicated, is less observable than an attempt to vary the expression of the same idea in extempore prayer. Another advantage of a liturgical form of worship is, that it affords no room for display on the one side, or criticism on the other. Few can have attended, even occasionally, at places of worship where extempore prayer is employed, without having felt themselves pained and offended by the way in which the petitions and expressions of the prayer are frequently animadverted upon. A liturgy cuts off all opportunity for this. The retention of so much ceremony as is maintained in our forms of public worship, is an objection sometimes openly, and not less often silently, made: but ceremonies are not now what they were

in the days of our second Charles, when toleration was unknown, and violence scarcely left reason or conscience any scope for excuse, or allowed them to decide upon the real degree of importance due to those trifles (for trifles many of them were) for which some of our forefathers unwillingly separated themselves from the church. That which when voluntarily acceded to is unfelt, becomes a burden too heavy to be borne when imposed on the conscience.

I will only add, that I am quite sure that a preponderating attachment to the Church of England, is entirely consistent with a cordial regard and respect for all, of whatever denomination, who "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;" and while I think that every member of our church has reason to apply to himself the words of the Psalmist, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places," still I would always desire to recollect that "although here we are nurtured and cultivated in different pastures and enclosures, there is, after all, but one Shepherd and Husbandman, and there will be at last but one harvest."

T. B. P.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE passage of Scripture (Gal. iii. 20) upon which your correspondent L. H. G. makes some observations in your number for December, is confessedly obscure, and that obscurity has been increased by the way in which our translators have supplied the ellipsis that occurs in it. They have rendered it, "Now a mediator is not a *mediator* of one; but God is one;" supplying the word *mediator* in the first clause to complete the sense.

Were the term *friend* substituted for mediator, the passage would read thus:—"Now a mediator is not 'the

friend' of one 'party only;' but God is one party." The first clause seems to be an objection drawn from what had been said respecting the law being ordained *in the hand of a mediator*; and the latter is an answer derived from the perfections of God. For the Apostle had said (ver. 17) that the law which was given 430 years after the promise, could not disannul that promise so as to make it of none effect. But he had also said, that the law was ordained in the hand of a mediator; and supposes that an objection to what he had urged might be derived from that circumstance. That objection is stated in the first clause of this verse. "But," says he, "a mediator is not the friend of one party only"—he is the friend of both; and usually endeavours to procure mutual concessions, in order to secure reconciliation. If he do so in this case, then the law may be against the promise, and may disannul it. The objection would be valid, were the parties concerned imperfect, and liable to error or change, like those who are concerned in human affairs. But this is not the case; for God is one of the parties, and cannot err, and is incapable of change. Therefore the law is not against the promises of God, (ver. 28.) It was given 430 years after the promise, and cannot disannul it or make it void. The whole passage gives an interesting view of the permanence of the promise of salvation through Jesus Christ, which is the great charter of human redemption. For that promise was first given to Adam, was renewed and confirmed to Abraham, and was finally ratified by the blood of Christ, and forms the substance of the Gospel.

The ceremonial law was given by Moses, as the outward dispensation of its grace for a time; but it gave place to the more excellent dispensation of the Gospel: but the pro-

mise is one and unchanged. The things that *could be shaken* were removed as things that were made; but the things that *could not be shaken* remained.

Should these observations be deemed worthy of a place in the Christian Observer, it is but justice to add, that they were first suggested by a remark in the excellent "Scripture Lexicon" of Mr. Ewing of Glasgow.

T. S.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer. *

I BEG leave to send you some critical remarks on Job xxiii. 9; a passage, which is scarcely, if at all intelligible in our Authorized Version. The words in the Hebrew original are

שמאל בקשתו ולא אחז
יעטף ימין ולא אחז

Thus rendered in the Authorized Version: "On the left hand, *where he doth work*, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." The only difficulty occurs in the second word בקשתו; from which, as it stands at present, it is not easy to extract a probable sense. Miss Smith, in her elegant and ingenious version of this very difficult portion of holy Scripture, translates,

"To the left, *on his splendour* I cannot gaze."

This, though preferable to the Authorized Version, does not accord well with the context. Mason Good, a translator very inferior in accuracy to Miss Smith, proposes, as he too frequently does, to consider בקשתו as an Arabic word from the verb *اقتصر* *apfirehendere, vel apfirehendere velle*, &c. He translates the verse "On the left hand I feel for him, but have him not," &c.

This, it must be allowed, makes a clear and consistent sense; but the rules of sound criticism, I apprehend, will not sanction us in having recourse to the Arabic language or idiom, except in extreme cases; where

the Hebrew text, aided by the various readings and the ancient versions, affords no light. I think in this, as in many other cases, the ancient and valuable Syriac version may be consulted with advantage, and may assist us in restoring, with much probability, the original reading of the Hebrew text. The Syriac version of the first hemistich in Walton's Polyglot is as follows: (I give it in Hebrew characters:*) Which he thus translates, "Ad lævam meam *quesivi*, nec apparuit mihi."† The Syriac verb corresponds with the Hebrew בקש,† and thus, I conceive, leads us to the genuine and original reading. For בקשתו, then, I propose to read בקשתי, which is a slighter alteration than is frequently met with in the various readings of Kennicott and de Rossi. The couplet may be restored and translated as follows, distinguishing by italics, as our translators have very properly done, the words which are not in the present Hebrew text.

שמאל [בקשתי] ולא אחז
יעטף ימין ולא אחז

"I seek him on the left hand, but cannot perceive him:

"He hideth himself on the right hand, so that I cannot see him."

I am unwilling to conclude this letter, without adding my testimony, such as it is, to the general fidelity and accuracy of our Authorized Version; and I am firmly convinced that those who are most vehement in their censures of it are so, either from ignorance, from self-sufficiency, or from the adoption of false and fanciful principles of criticism.

When we consider the venerable

* למסלי בצית ולא אחז לי

† Walton gives the same translation of the Arabic; but as I am unacquainted with that language, I shall content myself with thus slightly alluding to it.

† " *petiit, rogavit, quesivit, requisivi* "—Castelli Lex. Syr.

"בקש *querere, requirere*."—Taylor's Heb. Conc.

antiquity of the Hebrew Scriptures, the conciseness of the language, the errors of transcribers, which, without a constant miracle, must have crept into the text during the lapse of so many centuries, the many words which occur but once in the Bible, the many anomalous expressions, the many passages which critics of every age have vainly endeavoured to illustrate; we ought rather to be surprised that our translators have accomplished so much, than that they have left some gleanings for the critics of the present age.

KIMCHI.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I BEG to call your attention to a misconstruction of a scriptural term, which occurs in the Sermon in the Christ. Observ. for July, 1819, and which really involves, though not intentionally, a very important point of doctrine. The text to be expounded, is 2 Tim. iv. 8: "I have fought a good fight, &c....*henceforth* there is laid up for me a crown," &c.

Henceforth, observes your sermonist, "not as the claim to such a blessing, for we have already seen that he viewed it as a free gift, but as the qualification for enjoying it; for he also knew that without both faith and holiness no man can see the Lord." The inference is no doubt excellent, but the passage does not afford any authority for it. If your writer had referred to the original text, he would have perceived that the Apostle's word is *λοιπόν*, which cannot be made to express either claim or qualification: but simply means "for the rest," that is of time, or, as our translators have properly rendered it, "*henceforth*."

By this inadvertent exposition, your work might appear to be sanctioning a doctrine, which, I presume, it is one of your main ends to oppose—justification by works and not by faith: *articulus cadentis ecclesie*—for

the passage thus read may equally well be understood in this sense, as in that which the writer has assigned to it.

CLERICUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE interval between one Sunday and another, it has been justly remarked, is sufficiently long for the distracting cares of the world and the corrupt inclinations of our own hearts materially to weaken, if not entirely to obliterate, the impression which may have been made upon the mind by the instructions of the preceding Sabbath. It is probably a conviction of this truth, which has induced many clergymen, who are earnestly solicitous for the spiritual welfare of their flocks, to adopt the practice of meeting, upon some day in the week, such of their parishioners as may be disposed to avail themselves of this privilege, for the purpose of an exposition of the Scriptures, and of prayer. The peculiar nature of these services, and especially their being more simple and familiar than the public and stated offices of the church, renders them admirably calculated to exert a favourable influence on the minds of the simple and sincere attendants upon them; especially among the poor, who cannot always comprehend more set discourses. My object, however, in this communication, is not so much to expatiate upon the *advantages* of these services, as to propose a question respecting some of the *circumstantials* in the conduct of them, and to which I should be happy in receiving a reply from your correspondents.

In parishes, where the habitations lie scattered to a wide extent, or to which are appended one or more hamlets at a distance from the parish church, from a regular attendance at which the inhabitants may consequently be precluded, it is not, I believe, unusual, and in such cases it is doubtless not only admissible, but

even highly laudable, for the minister to meet his flock in some private dwelling. In such a place he is perfectly at liberty, I presume, either to use an unwritten prayer, or to adopt any pre-conceived form, or to make selections from the Liturgy of the Church, according to the best of his judgment, of what is most suitable for the occasion. In parishes, however, where there does not exist an absolute necessity for a minister to convene a number of his parishioners, for religious worship and instruction, in any place except the parish church, the two former modes of prayer are evidently inadmissible. The question, then, which I wish to ask, is, whether a clergyman, affording this gratuitous and extra service, and convening the attendants upon it in his church, is bound to read the *whole* of the service for evening prayer (for the evening is usually the time in which such meetings are held,) or whether he may curtail it, by making a selection of some portions of it. Let it be remembered, that the object of these meetings is *principally* scriptural instruction; from which, indeed, prayer is by no means to be excluded, on the sincerity and fervency of which, for the Divine blessing, success is chiefly to be expected. But as a more lengthened exposition, and a more familiar application, is on such occasions to be employed, the attention of the hearers ought not to be exhausted by much previous liturgical exercise. Of the advantages of curtailment, not a doubt, I conceive, can be entertained; neither can it be supposed, that the mere act of such curtailment, as such, is an offence, *coram Deo*. The only point on which the question hinges, is whether there is any thing in the vows made at ordination or institution, by which a clergyman is bound, in these extra-services, to read every part of the prescribed Liturgy.

I know not whether a distinction may be drawn, sufficiently strong to affect the present question, between a chapel in an episcopal palace, and a church in a country parish: but I have been present, with between twenty and thirty other candidates for ordination, at the celebration of Divine service, in the chapel of one of our bishops, one of the first in rank and wealth, and not very favourable to ecclesiastical innovations, where the morning service was read by his lordship's chaplain, in the presence of the bishop himself, with very similar curtailments to those which I would propose for adoption previously to an expository lecture in a country church.

If, then, it be allowable on these occasions of extra-service, on a week-day, to make a partial use of the Liturgy, it occurs to me that the following would constitute a desirable selection: To commence with the General Exhortation; after which, The General Confession.

The versicles, beginning with, "O Lord, open thou our lips;" and ending with, "The Lord's name be praised."

Then let a psalm or hymn be sung;

After which a lesson of Scripture should be read, which might be either one of the appointed ones, or that which is to be the subject of exposition.*

The Magnificat, or Nunc Dimittis, or one of the selected Psalms.

The Lord's Prayer, with its preceding and succeeding versicles.

The three Collects.

The Prayer for all Conditions of Men.

The General Thanksgiving.

The Prayer of St. Chrysostom.

The Apostolical Blessing.

* For the alteration of the appointed lesson, I would allege the authority of the Injunction of Queen Elizabeth, prefixed to the second Book of Homilies.

I am aware that different opinions exist, as to almost every point connected with the preceding remarks; and I trust that my queries, if inserted, will elicit the sentiments of other correspondents on a subject of great practical importance, both to the clergy and their parishioners.

QUÆRENS.

FAMILY SERMONS.—No. CXXXIV.

Psalm li. 10 —*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*

Our church appoints the following collect to be used daily during the solemn season of Lent: "Almighty and everlasting God, who hast nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent; create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

This prayer appears to be founded on the words of the text; and in order to increase our knowledge and devotion in offering up the petitions in this collect, during the present season of penitence, let us consider the nature and extent of the blessings which we are there taught to implore.

We supplicate chiefly two things; repentance and pardon for the past, and a new and contrite heart for the time to come. These two blessings are closely connected; the heart cannot be renewed without producing a corresponding change of life; nor can the conduct be truly right in the sight of God, without springing from a new and contrite heart. To attempt to separate the two is to disunite what God himself has indissolubly joined.

The term, translated repentance, literally signifies a change of mind, or purpose. This change makes sin appear as offensive in its nature, as

it is injurious in its consequences, while it renders all the holy deeds and sentiments of the Christian character congenial to the renewed mind.

First, in viewing the necessity of that penitence which is always required of us, and which is peculiarly brought under our serious consideration at this solemn period of the ecclesiastical year, it may be useful to examine the nature of the petitions contained in the text, and in the appropriate prayer which we have already heard. It was a fact well known to our wise and pious Reformers, that there is in human nature a desire rather to dissemble and cloak our sins before Almighty God, than suitably to acknowledge and lament them. Yet if we seriously consider the case, we shall see the absolute necessity of such deep contrition. For, in the first place, it is frequently enjoined by God himself: "Thus saith the Lord Repent and turn yourselves from your idols, and turn away your face from your abominations." The New Testament is as explicit as the old, on this subject: John preached, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and our Lord himself, confirmed the injunction of his forerunner: for we find it said, that "from that time Jesus began to preach, saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Repentance, again, is necessary to the pardon of our transgressions, as we learn from that command, "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Where there is no penitence, there can be no Scriptural hope of the favour of God; for sin interposes between us and heaven. Neither can the conscience have any true repose, till sin is repented of and forsaken; for there is no well-founded peace to the wicked. It is true, there may be a false peace, but not that genuine peace, "which passeth all understanding," for which we daily pray,

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and which is the peculiar blessing of the true Christian; who, conscious of his iniquities, deeply humbles himself before the Throne of Divine Mercy, and places his whole trust in his Redeemer, for pardon and acceptance with God. All the promised blessings of this life, and all the felicities of another, belong only to the penitent; for it is only he who repenteth and forsaketh, that shall find mercy. An impenitent sinner has no Scriptural prospect of heaven, nor indeed would he be capable of its enjoyment: the justice of God, displayed against sin, forbids his entrance there; and his mercy is not inconsistent with his justice. The nature, also, of that holy state is such, that nothing that defileth can obtain admission. The company and delights of that world of purity would be quite uncongenial to the disposition of an impenitent and unrenewed mind.

In former ages of the church, the season of Lent was not only peculiarly devoted to the inculcation of this duty, but those who had offended their Christian brethren, by their conduct, sought pardon, by humble supplications, both of God and their neighbours. Their repentance having been fully evidenced, they were received again into the bosom of the church, and became entitled to those outward privileges which had been suspended during their obstinate continuance in sin. While this strict discipline lasted, none were considered as outward and visible members of the church of Christ, who were not supposed to be giving evidence of being in character, as well as by baptism and profession, its true and lively members. The abuses which found their way into the church, at length rendered this system of strict discipline impracticable; and there seems no likely prospect of its being revived. We ought, however, as individual members of our church, so far to enter into its spirit as to avail ourselves of

this solemn season, for an especial examination of our own hearts, with a view to our increase in penitence.

Yet beware of imagining that repentance is a temporary affection of the mind, peculiar to certain days and times, or to be exercised only after the grosser violations of God's law. Rather is it the employment of life: every hour has its sins and temptations, and therefore we need *constantly* to offer that humble petition, "Forgive us our trespasses." To avoid this common mistake, let us, as we have considered the *necessity* of repentance, proceed, secondly, to view its *nature*.

To repent truly, is not merely to acknowledge our sins with our lips; for if so, there would be little difference between the true penitent and the formalist, the Pharisee and the Publican. Pharaoh, when convicted of his transgression, could say, "I have sinned:" and the very same expression was used by Balaam to the angel, and by Saul to Samuel; nay, even by Judas himself, when he had betrayed his Divine Master.—The language of the lip, unaccompanied by corresponding feelings of soul, will not be acknowledged as true repentance, by Him who searcheth the heart.

Neither, again, is that repentance genuine, which extends only to particular and gross sins; for we are commanded in every case to abstain from all appearance of evil, and "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." Saul slew the Amalekites, but spared Agag their king; and thus men deceive themselves, by a false show of executing the commands of God. It is possible to go through all the forms and language of repentance, while there is no reverential awe of the Almighty in the mind. This appearance of sincerity may deceive our neighbour, but it will not avail us before God.

True repentance then should

spring from a scriptural estimate of the extent of our offences. That man knows little of his own heart, who, elevated by a self-righteous spirit, looks with satisfaction, instead of profound humility, upon his own imperfect and sinful observances.—A due knowledge of Scripture, and of ourselves, will teach us our guilt, as fallen creatures, with the innumerable sins, negligences, and ignorances, whereby we have justly provoked God's wrath and indignation against us. And, to say nothing of the grosser vices of the profligate, when even the sincere Christian looks either at human nature in general, or at his own heart, what a tissue does he perceive, of sins, weaknesses, and imperfections! He beholds both tables of the Law openly and secretly violated, and too often has occasion to perceive the truth of that divinely inspired assertion, "There is none that doeth good, no not one." If from the commands of the Moral Law, he turn to the still higher injunctions of the Gospel, and proceed to consider how much he has offended against the mercies and long-suffering of God—against the remonstrances of the Divine Spirit, and the dictates of his holy word—he will perceive that a scriptural estimate of sin is one of no superficial kind; and this estimate is necessary, as the foundation of all true repentance.

True repentance implies, further, real sorrow and contrition for sin. It is not dictated simply by fear of punishment, but by a sense of remorse at having displeased so merciful a Creator, so gracious a Redeemer, so compassionate an Enlightener, and Sanctifier, and Guide. Every person is more or less grieved for his vices, as far as they entail punishment in this world or the next; but by nature we have no hatred to sin on account of its defiling the soul, or of its being contrary to the law of God, and the ends for which mankind was originally created. But the sincere

penitent feels sorrow as well as fear; and this sorrow, we learn in the collect already mentioned, must be adequate (if indeed any repentance of ours *could* be adequate!) to the enormity of our offences; for we are "*worthily*" to lament them; that is, not meritoriously, but duly, and according to their aggravations. True penitence should be accompanied with constant self-examination, in order that we may really know our own hearts, that we may perceive the magnitude of our offences, and that our repentance may not be partial or insincere; but deep, and permanent, and universal. Sins of omission as well as sins of commission, sins of the heart as well as sins of the life, should all excite in us deep and penitential sorrow, since even the least transgression, if, indeed, any transgression *could* be little, shews a sinful disposition of heart, and, without a Redeemer, would be as unpardonable as the most flagrant vices.

With lamenting our sins the church has very appropriately connected "acknowledging our wretchedness." It is this that renders us, as it were, in a fit frame for the appreciation of the Divine mercy.—And surely none can venture to assert that this language, which the church instructs us to use daily throughout the season of Lent, is too humiliating to allow of his adopting it from his heart. Rather ought we to thank the Almighty for a form of sound words, which, as often as we would go back to the mere suggestions of unassisted reason, recalls us forcibly to the essentials of the Gospel, in the knowledge and practice of which our forefathers lived and died, and the benefits of which they are now enjoying at the right hand of God.

This deep feeling and acknowledgment of our spiritual wretchedness is the very foundation of all true religion. Our Lord teaches, that "the whole have no need of a

physician, but they that are sick." It is usually for want of a due sense of their own unworthiness, that some are led to deny the great doctrine of the Atonement; and that others, though without verging to so awful an extent, yet practically divest Christianity of its essential attributes of gratuitous mercy and unmerited forgiveness. We best learn the infinite value of the Redeemer's sacrifice, and its indispensable necessity for our salvation, when we thus truly lament our sins and acknowledge our wretchedness, without a conscious sense of which, the system of mercy revealed in Scripture by the obedience and death of Christ, will appear of little importance to us.

Thus have we briefly considered the nature and necessity of that repentance, which needeth not to be repented of. But we must not forget that, with pardon for the past, our church instructs us to implore that God would create and make in us new and contrite hearts for the time to come. It is this petition which is immediately taken from the words of the text, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

This view of repentance, as connected with a renewal of heart, is very important. For what is it that makes repentance necessary, but that the heart of man is sinful, and needs to be cleansed from its impurities? It was not till sin entered the world that such a petition became suitable. The very supplication to God, to act thus in our behalf, should therefore constantly remind us of what we are ever prone to forget, that by nature, and unassisted by the Spirit of God, we are as weak as we are sinful, and as averse to what is good as inclined to what is wrong. Conversion to God is therefore a complete change of nature; which corresponds with the assertion of the Apostle, that "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath

before ordained that we should walk in them."

To inculcate repentance, therefore, without a renewal of heart, would present a very inadequate as well as unscriptural view of the subject. The heathens themselves could enjoy a sort of repentance; but they were ignorant of that sister grace, which in Scripture is connected with it—namely, *faith*. There is danger lest we make even our supposed virtues minister to our spiritual pride; and thus, instead of viewing repentance as that by which we are humbled in our own estimation, and are led with implicit faith to the cross of our Redeemer, we should begin to take credit to ourselves, as though we had performed some meritorious act; thus making the Almighty as it were our debtor, and derogating from the freeness of his mercy in Jesus Christ.

This connexion between repentance and faith, extends also to repentance and holiness; so that when we pray that our hearts may be renewed, or made clean within us, we should ever remember, that to the influence of faith is ascribed, by St Peter, the property of purifying the heart.

Our church is uniformly anxious in retaining this scriptural connexion between repentance and faith.—If, in the Communion Service, forgiveness of sins is promised, it is to them that with *heartly repentance and true faith* turn unto God. The same idea pervades all our services. In the Catechism, for example, repentance whereby we forsake sin, and faith whereby we stedfastly believe the promises of God, are inseparably connected. It is not sufficient to inquire whether we repent us of our former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life, without examining also, whether we have a lively *faith* in God's mercy, through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and, as one great fruit and evidence of our repentance and

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faith, whether we are in charity with all mankind.

The highest blessing which man can enjoy upon earth, is that for which we pray in the collect under consideration; namely, "perfect remission and forgiveness." When the Christian duly considers his transgressions, he is astonished at the love of God in Christ, which procured his pardon and reconciliation. He thus begins to view his Creator under the character described in the words of the same collect, as "the God of all mercy." He acknowledges, that had the severity of justice, rather than free mercy, been exercised towards him, he had long since been cut off, without pardon or opportunity for repentance. Hence he learns to look up with gratitude and love to his Redeemer, who gave himself a ransom for him; and by faith in whom he becomes possessed of all the blessings of the new covenant of mercy. Thus, being justified by faith, he has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; and being at peace with God, he walks religiously in good works, and glorifies his Father which is in heaven. Amen.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

In your Review of the Life and Writings of Calvin (*Christian Observer*, July, 1817,) you took occasion to shew how inconsistent the pernicious doctrine, of the Moral Law not being binding upon the Christian, was with the sentiments of that Reformer. A similar remark might be extended to the greater part of the Puritan writers, even those who were most imbued with the peculiarities of Calvinistic doctrine. The following passage from a sermon preached before the Puritan House of Commons, Dec. 30, 1646, by Mr. Marshall (commonly called, in those days, the *pellifluous* Mr Marshall,) will tend to illustrate this point.

"Our times are times of errors, terrible errors; such errors as are

heretical and blasphemous. A new generation of men are risen up, and spread all the points of Arminianism, universal redemption, apostacy from grace, man's free will: multitudes of others cry down the Law, as not having any thing to do with God's people; many denying the Lord Jesus Christ, that bought us with his blood, to be God, or the Holy Ghost to be God; others denying the three persons in the Trinity. These, and abundance such horrid things as these are, do spread and scatter like wildfire every where, in all corners of the land."

This passage is curious in two or three points of view; but it is particularly striking as shewing the abhorrence of the respectable Puritans, both for Arminianism and Antinomianism. Marshall seems to speak of those who deny the doctrines of Election and indefectible Grace, and those who deny the obligation of the Moral Law, as equally "heretical and blasphemous." It is remarkable also, that immediately after mentioning those who "cry down the Law, as not having any thing to do with God's people," he adds, what in a late secession has so closely followed upon this awful doctrine, the denial of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost as God, with other heresies affecting the doctrine of the Trinity;—so intimately is one error connected with another; and so fatal is the transition from a denial of the obligations of the moral law, to delusions of every other kind!

PHILONOMOS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

AMONG the arguments employed to discountenance the efforts of Christian benevolence among the heathen, it is not unfrequently urged, that the rites of Paganism, however cruel or absurd, are nothing but a well-meaning, though misguided, attempt to please the Deity, and that they are consequently acceptable in his sight.

All the superstitions of the ancient and modern heathen world are by many traced up to this source. The first idolaters are represented as men who were anxious to discover the best mode of approaching the Divinity, and who would gladly have pursued a better than their own, had it been within their knowledge. Such a view appears to me very inconsistent with the early history of the world, as related in Scripture. The following passage, from the valuable Boyle Lectures of the present Bishop of Llandaff, places the subject in a far more correct light.

"Whatever difficulty," remarks Dr. Van Mildert, "there may be in arranging this perplexed mass of absurdity, into any regular system, it is sufficiently evident, that it must have originated in a wilful departure from the truth. For when we consider, that man was not, from the beginning, left to himself, to discover the true Author of Nature, or the worship that was due to him; but was instructed by immediate communication from his Creator, in every thing relative to his spiritual concerns; how can we regard the introduction of these false divinities, in any other light than that of wilful apostacy from the true God? Ignorance could not be the cause of Cain's departure from the faith, nor of the infidelity of his immediate descendants; neither could it be pleaded in excuse for the children of Seth (emphatically called 'the sons of God,') when they forfeited their claim to that title, by entering into alliance with the wicked posterity of Cain. The same is to be observed, respecting the immediate descendants of Noah, whom we cannot suppose to have been ignorant of the true religion, founded on the expectation of the promised Redeemer, notwithstanding their readiness, so soon after the flood, to renounce that expectation, and to follow their own corrupt imaginations.

"When we thus investigate the nature and origin of false religion, its heinousness, as involving the guilt of presumptuous opposition to the Divine will, is hardly to be disputed. It is, therefore, but a vain apology for heathenism (when we speak of its first origin and introduction,) to treat it as a harmless invention of poor unenlightened mortals, labouring with good intentions, but under invincible ignorance, to discover the true God, and to perform to him an acceptable service. Neither will it avail (for the vindication of the earliest apostates, at least, from the faith) to have recourse to those refined and specious theories, by which ingenious men have endeavoured to conceal the enormities of the Gentile superstitions, under the semblance of profound mystical instruction; representing them as useful political institutions; nay, even dignifying the objects of pagan worship with the appellation of 'elegant deities,' and extolling them as the invention of wise and discerning minds. Whereas the fact appears to be clearly this: that mankind had been from the beginning in possession of the one true religion; but that the founders of heathen idolatry 'forsook the Lord, that they might serve strange gods.' This is uniformly the language of Scripture, and every thing that we can collect from history confirms the truth of this representation."

Such being the real origin of pagan superstition, the duty of communicating to the heathen that heavenly light, the primeval traces of which their forefathers obscured, but which has shone upon us more and more brightly, "to the perfect day," will appear incontestable. The heathen innovators on the original revelation committed the "two evils" mentioned by Jehovah; they both "forsook the Fountain of living waters, and hewed out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that could hold

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no water." While, therefore, we pity their uninstructed offspring, and commit them with implicit acquiescence to the disposal of the "Judge of all the earth," who assuredly will do right in his conduct towards them in the final allotment which he shall see fit to make in the eternal world; let us not be seduced by false views of the origin of their superstitions to an indifference in promoting the great work of their conversion. Paganism, whether we consider its origin or its end, its immediate rites or its ultimate tendency, is an evil unmitigated and unmitigable, and, as such, demands the earnest prayers and efforts of every Christian, "to open the blind eyes, and to turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God." The result will well repay the effort, if, with us, they are enabled to obtain "forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ Jesus."

Before I conclude these remarks, permit me to adduce another extract from a different source, in confutation of a not less erroneous, though quite opposite opinion, relative to the heathen. We have seen that their superstitions were self-invented, in contempt of the light originally afforded by Revelation: it is no less true, that all that is correct in their theological tenets is capable of being traced to that Revelation. Some of the objectors to Christianity have chosen to represent its moral precepts as only an *improvement* on those of pagan writers. The objection is so well expressed and answered, in a speech of the Chief Justice of Sierra Leone, delivered to the members of the Auxiliary Bible Society of that colony, at their annual meeting, January 6, 1819, that the passage well deserves to find a place in connexion with the foregoing extract.

The Chief Justice remarked, that "To those who attempt to rob the

New Testament of the proofs of Divine origin afforded in the supreme purity of its moral injunctions, by saying 'this maxim is of Socrates, and that Pythagoras;' as if because those distinguished heathens lived before the Divine Redeemer, the Divine Redeemer took his precepts from them; our Lord himself furnished the most decisive answer, when, inculcating these maxims, he added, 'for such is the Law and the Prophets.' The true interpretation of the concurrence of the distinguished heathen teachers in these instructions is, that, being designed by the providence of God, as there is every reason to believe, to be lights to the Gentiles, to prepare them for the coming of the Redeemer, they were conducted, or at least the first of them, and the chief author of their best instructions (Pythagoras,) was conducted in search of wisdom to the land of Egypt; where the chosen people of God had long sojourned, and near to which they had been afterwards permanently established. There the waters of the Divine Word had flowed; and there, they had deposited some small portions and particles of their riches, as the streams descending from the rich mines and mountains of Africa deposit their gold dust: these particles Pythagoras, and other visitors, seeking to collect a store of virtuous wisdom, gathered and brought away. This is the true explanation of what approached to Christian purity, in the admired moral precepts of Pythagoras, or any of the subsequent virtuous and revered philosophers of the ancient schools. They found and gleaned the precious dust, where the streams had flowed; but the streams and the fountains are ours—the mines and the gold are ours; and not only the golden mines of the Old Testament, but the invaluable beds of precious stones of the New."

E. W.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IN your Number for August, pp 515, 516, you presented your readers with a very useful table of the oaths and qualifications, required by the laws of this country, on taking certain offices, &c. The propriety of *some* of these, such as receiving the sacrament for an office, has been justly questioned. On this point I shall not now venture: but there is one class of oaths and declarations which it is greatly to be wished was made the subject of legislative consideration; I mean, such as have a direct tendency to produce falsehood and perjury. How far these extend, is another question, on which different persons will form different conclusions, so that in the details there would be great contrariety of opinion. But the general principle must be widely conceded, that oaths and declarations ought never to be demanded, where the temptation to falsehood and perjury is great, and the security gained by the declaration small. The case of the declarations made by the boys at some of our public schools has justly excited attention. Some of these are such, as can scarcely be made, in many instances, without a quibble or mental reservation; yet, while they thus weaken the moral principle, they fail to effect their intended object. An equally exceptionable case, is the declaration of guilty or not guilty, required from accused persons, and without which their trial cannot commence. *In theory*, the law wishes no man to be his own accuser; yet, *in fact*, it requires the accused person either to become such, or to utter a deliberate falsehood, in every case where he is guilty. Judges, juries, and jurymen, often combine to urge a penitent prisoner to this unwilling breach of truth, in order that his trial may be legally conducted.

Some other cases might be mentioned, but I forbear: I cannot, however, but hope, that now Parliament

is freed from the cares of foreign war and internal tumult, something will be done towards correcting an evil of serious magnitude to the morals of the country. It is very certain that oaths and declarations are far too much multiplied; and the effect of this frequent recurrence must doubtless be greatly to detract from their solemnity.

Instances might be mentioned, in which the propriety of a different line of policy has been felt. The East India Company, I have understood, some time since abolished the regulation, by which widows of officers, marrying again, lost their pension. It was obvious, that such a provision could only lead to abuses, without effecting any great benefit. A similar remark applies, in a degree, to college-fellowships; and it is highly to the credit of our universities, that so few cases of fellows marrying, and yet keeping their names on the books till they receive a living, have occurred in their annals. But I must leave the question to the consideration of your readers, and only wish at present to invite public attention to the general subject. S. R. X.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IN the journals of the last month, it is stated, that a number of informations have been laid against clergymen, in the counties of Suffolk and Essex, for not reading the act against profane cursing and swearing, as by law appointed, in their respective churches, four times a year. This provision of the act furnishes a constant source of vexatious litigation. On one occasion, a large number of clergymen in one city, not much fewer, I believe, than twenty, were brought up to answer for a breach of this injunction: on this occasion, the complainant was not, as is usual, a common informer; but a well-meaning person, who, shocked at the profane language so common in our streets, wished to check the

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evil by forcing the clergy to read the act as appointed.

The very general neglect of complying with the provision, proves either that the clergy are negligent in their duty, or that the injunction is ill-advised. There is no reason to conclude the former to be the case; especially as the most active and zealous clergymen are often found among the delinquents. The fact is, that a very general persuasion exists in the profession, that the reading of the act in church is worse than useless. In the first place, the church-going part of the population are not generally among those most addicted to profane cursing and swearing; so that reading the act in church, is like preaching against neglecting Divine worship, when none but the frequenters of it are present to hear. Had the town-clerk been directed to read it in the market-place, or the landlord of an inn in his public room, the injunction would have been more seasonable. Besides, the length of the Act, which is not much short of that of an ordinary sermon, is a painful interruption to Divine worship; and in those churches where the law is regularly complied with, many of the

parishioners make a point of absenting themselves from public worship on the days upon which this ceremony is to be performed. The days on which it is appointed to be read, are the Sundays next after March 25, June 24, September 29, and December 25; the consequence of which is, that it often falls on the first Sunday in the month, which being, in many churches, a sacrament-day, adds greatly to the inconvenience.

On several grounds, therefore, it were much to be wished that the provision were repealed. It is viewed, in point of fact, in most places, as a sort of obsolete injunction, except where the vigilance of informers has called it into exercise. In very few of the churches which I have frequented, is a copy of the act in readiness, even if the clergyman inquired for it. Yet, while it remains in force, *it undoubtedly ought to be read*; and it seems important, that the clergy should either generally determine to comply with the requisition of the law, or petition for its repeal.

G. G.

MISCELLANEOUS.

REMARKS ON SCOTTISH SCENERY AND MANNERS IN 1819.

(Concluded from p. 27.)

JUNE 19.—Arriving rather early at the hospitable house of Ballyhulish, I had leisure for a long ramble on the opposite shore of Lochaber; crossing the ferry over Loch Leven, which is a ramification of Linnhe Loch. There a storm drove me to a hut, where I held a long conference with a Highland family; and amidst its smoke and feculence, a cleanly bowl of milk was offered to me with the characteristic hospitality and manner of the country. How can

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these mountainers bear the stifling atmosphere, and black deposits from the rafters of their cabins? Yet they live in apparent tranquillity of enjoyment, with eyes uninjured by the smoke, and generally possessing a wardrobe of three suits of clothes; one for common days, a second for the Sabbath, and a third for funerals. The cotter himself was an Episcopalian; and, as it would appear, one on conviction; for in a disquisition carried on between us on the subject of the religious divisions of his country, he said, in reference to the Presbyterians, "that the New Testament

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was against them." As he had little English, and I no Gaelic, I could not well make out by what inductive process he reached his conclusion; but the general notion was, "*they* had begun since the Apostles' days;" and he said something concerning the suddenness of their rise. How consoling must this anecdote be to certain opponents of the Bible Society; evident as it is, that an untutored Highlander can confute his Presbyterian neighbours out of the Scriptures, without note or comment!—This person was a maker of grave-stones. I saw one under his hands formed of a slab of blue slate, which he had quarried from an islet in the lake. The characters were very similar to such as one finds on English grave-stones, of about the date of the close of the seventeenth century; and if his performance indicated the state of the arts in Lochaber, I had too indulgently calculated their progress.

On the next day (Sunday) I attended, with the family in which I was visiting, the morning service at an Episcopal chapel, within two miles of Ballyhulish. At a point of the road thither, opened upon us the most finished landscape which I met with in all my tour. It was what, I believe, painters call a study; and here it seemed easy to become a professor of the picturesque in a moment. The foregrounds, mountains, withdrawing vales, lawns, forest, or rather park, appearances, islands, and shores, were all in right proportions and in right places. So at least they shewed themselves to me, though Glover might think differently. I only wish that he would transfer the scene to the water-colour exhibition.—The whole service at the chapel was in Gaelic, which, from this example, I thought a musical language. The clergyman came to officiate from a distance of eight miles. His manner was unaffected and serious; and the congregation—where I recognised the divinity-pro-

fessor of the cabin—was only tolerably good, being diminished, to-day, in consequence of the sacrament at Appin Kirk. This was attended by religionists of all persuasions; and, on the present occasion, some of the Episcopalians must have walked at least fourteen miles. I noticed here a Gaelic version of Bishop Beveridge on the Liturgy.—The situation of the laird's house, in this world of mountains, is certainly one of the higher order. Opposite to its front is an elevation of prodigious magnitude, and its steep acclivities are covered with verdant turf to their summit. As I watched the flocks thinly dispersed along their sides, I was reminded of Gilpin's remark, that, under such circumstances, "the sheep appear to hang on immense green walls." Close to the door runs one of the busy burns of Caledonia.—Within the space of a few hours it is alternately a rivulet and a torrent, in correspondence to the falls of rain on the surrounding heights. These aerial regions are the haunts of the eagle, the wild cat, and of a species of fox larger than his brother in the south. Otters and seals inhabit the subjacent lochs; the beach of them abounding in kelp and other seaweed. In the winter, the sheep and cattle occasionally browse on the marine vegetation. The former are said, during their summer pasturage on the mountains, to select, as their favourite luxury, the piles of grass growing through the intervals of the shiver. Its saccharine flavour is understood to be quite to their taste.—Less innocent beings, I am sorry to add, wander among the same retreats in the form of smugglers and makers of whiskey. What chilling information this to such children of the imagination as look for adventures here with gliding personifications of the genius of the tempests, Ossianic sons of the mists, fairies, warlocks, wraiths, and all the spectred visitants of brake and fell! But so it

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is; and the loathly defrauders of the revenue have the address to pervert some of Nature's most impressive features to their own purposes. In one instance—I am not sure that it happened here—they erected a kind of turf distillery, immediately under the perpendicular side of an immense grey rock; so that from the vales below, the smoke of the apparatus, by its similarity of colour to the hue of the surface along which it curled, was imperceptible.*—One anecdote more before I leave this place: Some time since, a whale, in its eager pursuit of the herrings on the coast, either of Morven (Ossian's Morven!) or Lochaber, plunging between two shelving and contiguous masses of rock, wedged itself immoveably in the intervening hollow, yet in a situation where, at all times of the tide, it found water enough to sustain life. When the tide ebbed, the neighbouring Highlanders were able to approach it with perfect security to themselves. After long endeavours, which, I fear, were, by some necessity, attended with cruelty, they succeeded in destroying it. I suggested to my informants, on this occasion, that when the next whale came alive on shore, they might easily bring a piece of ordnance down the lake from Fort William, one discharge from which might save trouble to all parties.†

June 22.—This morning I passed through the defile of Glencoe. As this is confessedly the most impressive scene in the Western Highlands, and has acquired, in the picturesque world, a claim seldom dis-

puted, to the epithets of stupendous, overpowering, terrific, and sublime, the recital of these stately adjectives brings me to the most embarrassing crisis of my narrative. I question the appositeness of their application. Author-tourists have usually defeated the vanity of their own purposes, by accumulating such extravagant phrases, as have awakened more extravagant expectations; as though they had entered, unconsciously, into a general conspiracy, to throw away their credit with those who come after them, and to induce universal scepticism. By an amusing inconsistency, they are fond of describing what the same paragraph frequently pronounces to be indescribable: they call scenes terrific, by which neither themselves nor others were ever terrified; and invest with attributes of sublimity, features at which the spectator gazes with indefinite feelings of disappointment, and with a kind of angry surprise at his own insensibility. This is not treating one fairly. Unquestionably, the moment a person on the spot begins to inquire into his sensations, the opening visions of sublimity (if indeed they *do* open) abruptly terminate in vacuity. The impression of the sublime, when real, admits of no technical investigation. One must feel, without being taught to feel. It must be the confession of nature—of pure, unsophisticated nature. There will be no disposition to analyze the composition of the scene. With the individual visitor to Glencoe, the point is, how *he* is affected. He cannot honestly admire things upon credit, and especially is quite unable to feel sublime against his will. As to my own impressions, I am bound, after this daring skirmish with the defenders of this strong pass, to detail them. I can then faithfully concede to the vale of Cona, the characters of majesty, solemnity, and awful obscurity; but am afraid to venture beyond limits thus circumscribed. The western entrance is marked by a front of

* This is a mistake. The trick in question was played, I believe, by some fugitive adherents of the Stuarts, in the days of Baron Bradwardine, to hide the smoke of a *bealing*; where, for a time, they contrived to elude the vigilance of the king's troops. More guilty devices have been practised by the manufacturers of the liquid fires of Scotland.—Q.

† The basking shark is frequently seen in the lochs of the western coasts.

broken precipices of naked rock, and much of the same aspect, but with more evident traces of disruption, and of power irresistibly exerted, is found generally through the defile;—generally, because there occur comparatively tame deviations from the majesty of the first approach. The retrospective appearances, on retiring from the depth of the glen up the winding steep towards the eastern termination, convinced me that the whole scene would exhibit far more imposing aspects, if entered from that point; for there, the spectator lingers long, and wonders without being instructed, and without insincerity. The state of the atmosphere, this morning, was such as powerfully augmented the solemnity of the scene. The craggy, serrated summits of the mountains, and portions of their declivities immediately beneath, were partially shrouded by heavy, opaque, yet bright-coloured clouds; which, in a way I feel myself incompetent to paint, darkened, within the recesses of the rocks, into the deepest glooms of obscurity; and produced a certain half-transparent, purplish, black appearance; exactly realizing the expression of *a night of clouds*.* This awful vision was seen best in such situations of the glen as enabled the spectator to stand almost under the cloudy coverings themselves; and in his upward look actually to trace transitions from light into darkness. It was a visible and most faithful commentary upon the imagery of Inspiration—"He made darkness his secret place: his pavilion round about him were dark waters, and

* (Ipse pater, mediâ nimborum in nocte.) Nebulous appearances of the kind have been noticed, of course, by the observer of nature, on mountains of inferior altitude to the "native bulwarks of the pass"—"the thunder-splintered pinnacles" of Glencoe; but only where there is a similarity of figure, and not on elevations of a spherical form.

thick clouds of the skies." Neither was this the only portion of Scripture forced upon the memory, by these features of desolation. The ravines and perplexed fissures disclosed to the traveller's observation, on each side of his ascending track, effected apparently by some extraordinary and convulsive effort of nature, and contemplated in combination with the torrent, struggling, in many places, invisibly along its dark and intricate course, recalled the passage—"Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O Lord! The earth shook and trembled; the foundations of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth." Such were, in part, my sensations in surveying the pass of Glencoe. You will, perhaps, accuse me, after all, of questioning and owning its sublimity with the same breath; or, must you adopt the painful alternative of pronouncing me to be incapable of sublime emotions?

From Glencoe to the King's House (an inn so called from having been built for the accommodation of the soldiery,) I went along an excellent military road, through a district of hopeless sterility, over mosses bounded by mountains concealed by mist and indications of approaching rain. The King's House furnished refreshment of no very royal description; and thence I proceeded, amidst wilds immeasurably spread, towards the inn at Inverounan, the very sight of which urged me onwards through the rain and dreariness of the evening. All surrounding objects had, for some time, been scarcely discernible. And this, thought I, is part of the price we pay for these luxuries; for tours in the Highlands cannot be reckoned among the *necessaries* of life! I was just able to observe, on the road-side, that wherever the turf had been removed from the moss, there appeared an almost

continuous diffusion over the surface of the peat, of the roots of trees ; so that all the country was certainly once a forest.* I noticed also two small encampments, pitched, in these houseless regions, for repairers of the roads. After several hours and miles of minor miseries, I reached Tyndrum at ten o'clock.—Soon after leaving this place the next morning, I was again overtaken by a drizzling rain, through which might only be imagined what could not be seen. Among the invisibles of the vicinity, was the holy pool in Strathfilan, formed by the eddying of a river round a rock. In this, lunatic patients are dipped three times, and then left bound among the ruins of a neighbouring chapel, during the succeeding night ; an excellent plan, one would calculate, not so much for removing as for inducing alienation of mind, in all cases where its existence was desirable. The victim is said sometimes to die in the night ; but if, in the morning, he be found unshackled, hopes are then cherished of his recovery. Cures, as I was assured, are sometimes performed.—By missing the turn at Crianlaroch, I wandered some miles out of the way ; but by this accident—and the weather for the time was rather clearer—was unexpectedly gratified by the beautiful scenery of Loch Dochart, winding at the foot of Benmore. This lake, as I have since heard, contains a floating islet, formed by the intertexture of the stems and roots of aquatic plants, and which is sometimes browsed by cattle.—These, when it is driven on shore, embark upon it, and are not unfrequently indulged with a voyage round the loch. The rain now came on again ; and, under an accumulation of petty distresses, I traversed the mountains to the romantic retirements of Glenfallach—a name signifying the hidden vale. Unpropitious

as the rain had been to the pleasures of a mountain progress, it offered some compensation by swelling unnumbered streams hastening down unnumbered gullies, and rushing, in various directions, as to some thirsty, boundless reservoir, impatient to receive within its bosom their congregated waters. The reservoir, in fact, was that of Loch Lomond.—Within a few miles of its upper extremity, these tributary streams, in their rapid descent over the rocks, assumed, in a thousand places bordering on the road, the importance of streaming and impetuous cataracts ;* and so many of them were heard at once, as powerfully exemplified the Apocalyptic image, “the sound of many waters.”

The weather was most happily favourable, as I skirted the shores of Loch Lomond. This enchanting expanse amply merits all that even the poets of the picturesque would have ascribed to its diversified beauty.—The intervening border of rock, between the road and the lake, thickly shaded, grouped, or sprinkled with trees, in all their summer foliage, carried along alternations of valley and steep, occasionally retiring from any visible connexion with the water, then presenting ever-changing glimpses of its undulating surface—such an affluent example of Nature's powers to delight her votaries, might warm frigidity itself with the fervours of enthusiasm. If I was incapable of finding the sublime in Scotland, I was certainly able to discover the beautiful, and to acknowledge the discovery with all my heart. A similar incapacity, counterpoised in some sort by a similar confession, was the result of a tour, some years ago, in North Wales ; but I then lost my credit with cer-

* When these burns are swelled by wet weather, they become discoloured, assuming the hue referred to in the Lay of the Last Minstrel :—

“Each wave was crested with tawny foam,
Like the mane of a chesnut steed.”

* Was this the region of the Sylva Caledonia?

tain of my picturesque friends, who, I am grieved to say, have looked cool upon me ever since; and I dread to see them again, on the recurrence of a subject so embarrassing to both parties. In respect to your own opinions on the point in question,

I do beseech your Grace for charity,
If ever any censure in your heart
Were hid against me, now forgive me
frankly.

June 24.—Tarbet. This also is one of the stations whence the wandering members of the order of St. Walter of the Trosacks, pursue their way to the Holy Land around Loch Katrine. As to myself, I was once more compelled to forego the pilgrimage, in consequence of the weather, and of other circumstances, such as the narrowing extent of my furlough; but the principal cause might be the almost incessant rain. However, I returned to England, under the heavy disgrace of having not visited the Palestine of this country. My friends may find it hard to forgive me, and I can only leave my defence to the genius of the Highland storms.* This morning I sat on the same spot, near the shores of the lake, during a partially fair interval of about two hours, watching the changes in the scenery, produced by atmospheric influences. Picturesque persons are perfectly just, in attributing so much to this circumstance. On a scale of such magnitude, the same composition wonderfully differs from itself, on the approaches and recessions of the

* I strongly suspect, without any disparagement to the integrity of Mr. Walter Scott, that his poem has conferred an artificial and false interest on the localities of his muse. Is it not allowed that the lakes of Killarney are far preferable to those of Scotland, even to Lake Katrine; and if so, why has the latter acquired such unrivalled admiration, but because it has a "lady" and a bard, and the other is destitute of both?

"They had no poet, and they died!"

gleams and shadows of a showery day. During the season, the Marion steam-boat makes her daily voyage round the lake from Balloch. My sensibility could not fail to be lacerated by the audacity of this monster, disturbing by her paddles the waters of the loch, which demand the appropriate embellishment of a vessel under sail; and must, doubtless, resent the intrusion of a machine, propelled by fire, and smoking like the cone of a glass-house. But it was truly said of life, "All thy accommodations are nursed by baseness;" and I went on board the Marion, disengaged from the sensibilities of the morning, and very glad to obtain an easy, dry, and even luxurious conveyance, to a ferry within two or three miles of Dunbarton. We coasted the lake to Rob Roy's Cave, round an islet of incomparable beauty, containing a ruin inhabited by a recluse, who has exiled himself, for some years, within the limits of the island, and was seen, as we passed, gathering sticks. On the whole, I think, that I prefer yesterday's ride on the shore, to the voyage of this morning. After all, a steam-packet is far preferable to a sailing boat, for surveying the scenery. It is regular in its progress, and steady in its motions; and the deck view is not interrupted by the intervention of sails and rigging. Add to this, that in a shower, much may be seen from the windows distributed on either side of the cabin. Is there no method of consuming the smoke of the engine? The dimensions of Loch Lomond, so usually exaggerated, are now pretty well ascertained to be, a length of twenty-four miles, by a breadth, in the widest part, of six; covering a space of, perhaps, twenty thousand acres. Foul rumours are abroad, that measures will be taken to drain it;—that is, to a certain degree; for no efforts of human avarice and mechanical skill can possibly lay it dry. The odious monosyllable *dry*, the echoes of its border-

ing groves would, I am convinced, refuse to repeat. Your consolation must be, that a scarcely perceptible lowering of the surface, if my informant was no flatterer, is all that the proprietors want. They accuse the lake of encroachments, and are only anxious to recover their lost rights. Let me leave its enchanting beach, its islands—some of them populous with deer—and its mountain boundaries, with the inquiry, What is admired on the lakes of Locarno and Como, on the Lago di Gardo, and on the expanse of Lungern and the magic waters of Switzerland, which may not be seen here? Soon after leaving Balloch, I passed by Smollett's pillar. From this road appeared, once more, the twin rocks of Dunbarton castle. Their guilt can no longer be extenuated: if I can hear you defend them again, I will manage to construct two insulated anthills on the velvet horizontal lawn of your flower-garden at ———; and leave the inference to yourself.

In the churchyard of a village between Glasgow and Kilmarnock, I observed a portable pulpit, used on the preceding Sunday at a sacrament. The common method of celebrating the eucharist, in country places, appears to be one of the darkest blemishes in the ceremonial of the Church of Scotland. That Establishment, usually regarded as the antipodes of the Church of Rome, does in this respect retain, what has about it something of the vulgarity and worst delusions of Popery. The sacrament becomes a kind of pilgrimage; and some measure, one would almost fear, of the old confidence in the wafer, is transferred to the occasion. But, supposing this not to be the case, the custom is still no better than an English wake; and indeed, in one material point, it is much worse. The waker professes to mingle no religion with the attendance at *his* saturnalia; but the sacramentarian goes through the ritual as a kind of necessary passport to

the humours of the day: it is his penance before the carnival. Should not institutions, which are essentially devotional, be conducted with all possible quietness; with an absence of the bustling and tumultuous accompaniments, occasioned by crowds of populace? The idea of a devout mob revolts the mind by its incongruity. Whether Burns's Holy Fair—by which name the rustic sacramental occasions of Scotland are familiarly designated—be a correct picture, or otherwise, I never inquired; but no one, who holds opinions of human corruption, similar to your own, ought to be blamed, if, on the ground of those opinions, he calculate that licentiousness, disorder, and demoralizing impressions are the natural results of this (may I call it so?) carnival-sacrament.—Temptation loses none of its malignity, by meeting men within the inclosure of religious ordinances.—The Temple itself became a den of thieves; and the sacrament of the early Corinthian Church was notoriously polluted by sensual indulgence. It might be added, that an abuse of the same institution became one of the most powerful instruments, by which the policy of Antichrist enslaved and cheated its victims; and, from whatever cause, its administration, even according to the reformed rites of the Church of England, does not prevent its reception from being, to all appearance, considered, in too many cases, as a death-bed key to unlock the gates of heaven, at the close of a life of practical infidelity.* Is not this, in truth, the essence of transubstantiation; the oblation of the consecrated bread and wine as a meritorious, purifying sacrifice, offered at least once, and

* This may be called the Protestant Succession to the principles of such persons as, in the dark ages,

———“to be sure of Paradise,
Dying, put on the weeds of Dominic;
Or, in Franciscan, thought to pass disguised.”

that once efficacious! How far an equally mistaken view of the eucharist prevails among too many of the Scotch sacramentarians, I know not. Superstition, or a blind faith of some kind or other, may be called the natural religion of mankind. It appears to be one of the last distempers of the mind, which the Gospel removes. It is by no means extinct in the "land of Bibles," and in the land of Presbyterians. It is matter of some surprise, that any degree of it should have vitiated the scanty ceremonial of the Kirk. But I must leave the subject in better hands.—Men of serious minds in the Church of Scotland, are, doubtless, anxious to reform the abuse in question: in the mean time, they will continue to educe at least *one* good from acknowledged evil, by addressing the multitudes with an earnestness proportionate to their numbers, their errors, and the many mischievous consequences, so *very likely* to grow out of the admixtures and confusions connected with a popular religious assembly.*

June 28.—The country, from Kilmarnock to Dumfries, is well known to be sprinkled with recollections, good and evil, of Burns. Mauchline is the scene of the Holy Fair; and near this place, I passed by the farm of Mossgiel, or Mosgaville, which he held with his brother Gilbert, after their father's death. The man who drove the coach to-day, between Kilmarnock and Cumnock, was, it seems, the identical person, who, in November, 1785 (a month

* The Sunday is observed in Scotland generally with greater strictness than among ourselves; especially in attendance on public worship. It is said, that when the French princes resided at Holyrood House, and noticed the decorum of an Edinburgh Sabbath, they expressed a conviction, that the blessings of Heaven must descend upon a people, by whom the day of rest was so faithfully kept.—No steamboats, or public carriages (except the mails) are allowed to be used, except on "lawful days."

of high importance in the annals of the Caledonian muse!) was assisting Robert Burns at the plough, when he turned up the mouse's nest! The field where this incident occurred, is close to the road side, and, as you might expect, is regarded as part of the sacred glebe of Scotland. As the vicinage of Loch Katrine is the Palestine of this country, the *santa casa*, near Ayr, where Burns was born, is its Loretto. "Here pilgrims roam, who stray so far to seek," and adore the relics of their canonized poet. Kirk Alloway is also numbered among the regular stages of their pilgrimage. Every knot and splinter of the rafters of this ruin has long since been worked up (like the mulberry tree of another poetical saint,) into snuff boxes and trinkets. I crossed the Lugar, Ayr, Irvine, and Nith, "rivers *well known* to song;" and especially to the countrymen of Burns, many of whom read his works, the second Bible of their land, with more intent than they bestow upon the first. The tomb of the prophet is at Dumfries; the cemetery of which town is a real curiosity, and ought to be visited by every traveller, independently of its principal ornament. There is a line in the Night Thoughts,

"How populous, how vital is the Grave!"

powerfully recalled by this scene; as the spectator involuntarily calculates the numbers who sleep below, in casting his eye over the vast variety of sepulchral monuments, covering their remains. There is a kind of original solemnity diffused around this portion of "the waste dominions of the dead;" which, I should suppose, is almost an unique example. In the north-west angle appears a building, constructed in what is usually called the form of a temple, open on three sides (resembling the burying-place of Robertson, in the Grey Friars churchyard at Edinburgh,) and containing

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the mortal remains of Burns. It is enclosed within a small garden, kept in perfect order, and decorated, among other plants, by a luxuriant Scotch thistle. Under this edifice will soon be erected a characteristic monument; with, of course, the usual assortment of emblems, and allegorical figures, from the chisel of Turnerelli: it is already arrived, and deposited, unpacked in the church. Another monument, and, I believe, one more ample and costly, is to be raised at Edinburgh. And such are the posthumous idolatries lavished on this man; while, in respect to certain, (of whom the world was not worthy!)

"Their ashes flew,
— No marble tells us whither."

The popularity of Burns's writings, should by no means create astonishment: they are so purely national, as scarcely to be indebted for a single sentiment, illustration, or phrase, to any country except his own:—all is the indigenous growth of home. A Scotchman sees the glens, braes, shaws, burns, and scars of his native land, peopled by the creations of his own poet's genius. But, alas! this populace of the fancy has, too often, little innocence of character! I was sorry to observe that some of the later and *cheap* collections of his works, have admitted several exceptionable pieces, refused by Dr. Currie. It is indeed true that the same editions contain something like an antidote; but will readers administer to themselves, what at best is only half a cure? No—they will select their parts, as the poet himself instructs them:—

"For why of death begin a tale?
Just now we're living sound and hale,
Then top and maintop crowd the sail,
Heave *care* o'er side!
And large, before enjoyment's gale,
Let's take the tide.

Christ. Observ. No. 218.

"This life, so far 's I understand,
Is all enchanted fairy land,
Where pleasure is the magic wand
That, wielded right,
Makes hours like minutes, hand in hand,
Dance by, full light."

While *such* a stream of voluptuous delusion winds through his pages, how few will pause, as they follow its course, to gather the caustic and bitter fruits of repentance, occasionally clustered on its banks! The truth simply is, that the serious parts of his writings will be most beneficial to those who least need them; while others will throw them away, disgusted with their gloominess and intrusion, and resolving not to be preached to, even by *such a good fellow as Burns*.

June 29.—To-day closed my six weeks' ramble into Scotland. I crossed the Sark this afternoon, with the hope of re-visiting the country, at some future time, and congratulating myself, in having found, *within the home circuit*, what many seek, I am convinced, with inferior success, among the contaminations of the continent; and this too, although three weeks of the six were nearly lost by unfavourable weather; so that I was compelled to fly over hill and dale, almost with the rapidity of Malise the henchman, when he bore the fiery cross in the day of the gathering. In fact, I have not so properly seen Scotland, as caught a distant glance of what is to be seen; a mere outline of some detached groupe, in a magnificent composition. Under the influence of these parting impressions, combined with others I trust of a loftier character, which have long cemented our intimacy, I remain, my dear sir,

Always faithfully yours,

J—— DE Y——.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I AM sorry to read in a very respectable work (the Gentleman's Magazine)

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zine for last month,) the following uncandid insinuation :

"Missionary Language.—I know not whether it is the Missionary Society, or their eulogist, that has made the discovery, 'that nearly 100 millions of *immortal beings* are found under the dominion of the small kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.' But Missionaries and Bible Society-men, and 'the supreme sovereign of the earth,' the Emperor of China, have, like the gods in Homer, a language of their own, and are not content to speak in the common dialect of mortal men."

If the writer of this paragraph, should see your work, and will take the trouble to add together the population of Great Britain, with her colonies and dependencies, and especially her widely extended oriental possessions, and will explicitly state how far the amount is short of the "missionary language," which he reprehends, he will confer a service on the cause of truth and good manners. Till then, he must allow his friends to adhere to their Homeric-Chinese dialect.

STATISTICUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

AMONG the causes of the distresses of the poor in large towns, there is one which has not met with the notice which I think is due to its importance—I mean the facility of procuring loans on pledges. It is very generally allowed that the wide extent of the bank discounts, by enabling persons to raise temporary supplies of money, greatly assisted, and even prompted, that improvident system of speculation in the mercantile world, which has been attended with so many disasters. A similar effect has followed in the case of the country banks and farmers; though, as in the former instance, much partial and temporary convenience has doubtless been mixed with the evil. It appears

to me that the case of the manufacturing classes, and the pledge-broker is nearly analogous. The poor man, when partially embarrassed, instead of learning to reduce each day's expense to the corresponding portion of his weekly wages, is tempted to exceed the proportion in the former half of the week, knowing that he can raise money for the latter half, by pledging some article of property, to be redeemed when his next week's wages are received. This facility of raising money naturally invites to improvidence. It may, indeed, on many occasions, be a great convenience; especially in the case of an honest family, thrown out of employment, for a short season, and wishing to anticipate their future resources, rather than seek parochial assistance. But, in general, even in this case, the same object would be secured in a more eligible mode, by going in debt for a short time to the neighbouring shopkeepers; and this temporary credit is seldom denied, where the character of the applicant is known to be fair, and his probability of procuring employment reasonable. Even incurring a debt, bad as it is, is usually a less evil than raising money on pledges, particularly when we consider the expense of interest and the liability to forfeiture. But even the facility of obtaining credit, however occasionally convenient, is in the long run an evil to the poor; as indeed every thing must be that enables them to forestal to-day the fruits of to-morrow's labour.

A family obliged to pay daily, or at most weekly, for their daily or weekly expenses, without any resource (except in extraordinary cases, which must be allowed for,) either from the parish, the pawnbroker, or the accommodating tradesman, must necessarily learn to economize. Were it not for pawnbroking, and the facility of obtaining credit, Monday would not so often be a lost day among artisans and

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the labouring classes. It is a truly wise petition, which our Saviour puts into our lips, "Give us this day (or day by day) our daily bread." The poor especially (I wish I could exempt all the rich from the remark) are too improvident, generally speaking, to be trusted, with safety, with the power and temptation of injuring their future prospects. If even persons of rank and education are often too puerile to check the capricious desires of the moment, though they know that they must inevitably entail debts, and perhaps ruin on their future prospects, we cannot wonder if the temptation of a pawnbroker's shop should induce the poor to imitate their conduct, and to purchase with their anticipated earnings, some gratification which their average income will not allow them to command, but which they have not resolution to forego.

Few persons feel, in respect of the evils of futurity, as they will feel when they actually arrive; and therefore, almost every man is too much inclined to prefer the gratification of the current hour, to the more solid expectations of a future day. This propensity is not only excused, but even adopted by the unthinking as a regular axiom of life, under the authority of some such equivocal aphorism, as that "one bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." In making the charge in question, I am only

accusing the poor of too often doing, to a certain extent in their temporal concerns, what unhappily too many of us all, both poor and rich, too often do in our spiritual ones. The conduct of Esau, in selling his birth-right for a momentary and trifling gratification, is but too accurate a delineation of human conduct in higher, as well as in similar, concerns.

In making the preceding remarks, I would not be understood to speak of the evils of pawnbroking, as the only or chief cause of the frequent distresses of our poor, especially in large towns; but I think it a concurrent one of considerable importance, and deserving great attention. Nor am I charging the receivers of pledges with unfairness in their transactions. But I conceive, and I am not alone in my opinion, that the facilities for raising money, created by the multiplication of pawnbrokers' shops, is an evil of considerable magnitude. The money so raised is, I fear, much oftener expended in purchasing spirituous liquors, or other vicious indulgences, than for the absolute necessities of life; so that in every way the poor are injured, without any thing like an equal benefit being conferred in return.—I hope, in tendering these remarks for insertion, I shall not be considered as justly forfeiting the title of

AN HONEST FRIEND
TO THE POOR.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Reflections, &c. By SAMUEL WIX, A. M. F. R. and A. S.

English Reformation and Papal Schism, &c. By the BISHOP of ST. DAVID'S.

Strictures, &c. By the Rev. H. C. O'DONNOGHUE, A. M.

A Letter to the Bishop of St. David's, &c. By SAMUEL WIX.

(Continued from p. 58.)

THE hopes indulged by Mr. Wix, of a favourable result from the proposed general council, appear to be founded, in a considerable degree,

upon the alleged "general disposition prevailing among the Roman Catholics to a reformation." We have seen as yet no satisfactory evidence of the general prevalence of such a disposition. But if it existed to the extent of Mr. Wix's statement—if, in any country, the eyes of men were opening generally to the evils of Popery—we should still question whether this was the mode of proceeding best adapted to the case.

We are aware that in some parts of the continent, the downfall of papal authority is very confidently predicted. "Most of the Catholic princes of Germany, we are told, feel an ardent desire to free themselves and their people from the shackles of hierarchical usurpation.....The fate of Rome, as an ecclesiastical power, is perhaps at this moment determined!"* Although the anticipations of this writer are probably far too sanguine, yet we have no doubt that the sensation produced in that country, partly by the circulation of the holy Scriptures, and partly by the tyranny of the papal see, has been considerable; and that the most strenuous efforts will be required to perpetuate the reign of darkness. And is it under these circumstances, that we are to lend an aid to the Court of Rome? If Protestantism be the true religion, why should we appear to give any countenance to those who wish to fix upon the necks of the Germans a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? Why should we not rather assist and exhort them to cast away those cords of spiritual bondage, and to emerge into that liberty, with which God has so wonderfully made *us* free? Even if the movements which are reported in the German States had only for their object some partial amendments in the system of Popery, yet

in the course of events they may lead now, as formerly, to an effectual reformation, by opening a free course to the truths of the Gospel. It might be very politic in the pope and his adherents to cry out, in such a case, to the Church of England, "Pray let us have a council; let us accommodate matters by mutual concession: we are in danger of being expelled out of Germany, and, perhaps, with your assistance, we may prop up our tottering cause." But the reply of Protestants would surely be, "We are glad to hear your confessions, but we will lend you no countenance: it is high time that idolatry and antichrist should be cast down. We are deeply indebted to the Germans for our own reformation, and we will not repay them by withholding the benefits, which they were so willing to extend to *us*."

In a question, however, of this kind, we are more intimately concerned with the state of the Roman Catholic religion in the British dominions. Does then this "general disposition to a reformation" manifest itself in this country? We are not aware of any evidence in proof of the fact; and we fear that there is evidence against it.

What, for instance, shall we say to "the short Litany of the blessed Virgin?"* a prayer suited to the darkest ages of Popery, and which exists in books of devotion used in England at this very day! What shall we say to "The Life and Miracles of St. Winifred, &c. printed in 1817?"† Our inference is, that no such prayer could be in use, and that no Papist would venture to publish such ridiculous and mischievous stories, if the disposition of which Mr. Wix speaks were generally prevalent.

But he refers more particularly to the sister island.

* Translation of a German pamphlet, on the subject, of Baron Von Wessenberg, &c. cited in Wix's Reflections, p. 104.

* See "The Protestant," No. XL.

† See our Vol. for 1817, p. 782.

"From the best information, the author is induced to believe, that in Ireland, as in other countries, while attachment to the authority of the Church, and to the essential articles of the Catholic faith, remains unshaken among the Roman Catholics—and long may it remain unshaken!—they are yet very generally actuated by a desire to abandon error." *Red.* p. 106.

To this *best* information, we oppose the following statements:—

A pilgrimage is annually made, in the north of Ireland, to Lough Derg; and a little tract is now before us, pointing out "the institution and nature of the stations of that holy place." It tells of the spiritual benefits of this pilgrimage, of the entrance into the holy island bare-headed and bare-footed, of the instruction to be derived from passing into this *island* by *water*, of kneeling before the altar, and kissing the stones of it that we may be cleansed from our sins; of obtaining grace and remission of sins by the blessed Virgin, of going round the altar seven times, of repeating seven decads, of the seven penitential beads dedicated to seven saints, of the entrance into the penal bed that we may be thoroughly purged from our sins, of the descent to the water by a craggy and uneven path, of fasting nine days, because we are to be assumed to the nine orders of angels, of remaining twenty-four hours in the vault, of plunging into the water, and leaving Pharaoh and his army—namely, sin and its inclinations—drowned in the red Lough, or St. Patrick's Purgatory, &c. &c. concluding with this address, "And Jesus being your Captain, by Jordan, or good life, you will enter the land of promise, which is eternal life (though highly walled with lofty virtues,) which God grant me and you pilgrims, by the intercession of the blessed Virgin Mary, all the saints, and especially of St. Patrick, our holy patron. Amen."

If it should be said, that these perhaps are ignorant pilgrims, and the writer of this work a person of no name or authority, we reply, How

happens it that we have no disclaimer of such fooleries on the part of the priests and bishops of the Romish Church? On the contrary, "The Life and Miracles of St. Winifred," to which we have referred, is the production of one of the most distinguished of its prelates—the Right Reverend John Milner, D.D., Vicar Apostolical. So far, therefore, are the Romish bishops and priests from discountenancing these gross superstitions and childish observances, and the fatally delusive hopes connected with them, that even in this enlightened age, and in this enlightened country, we find the paramount influence of the hierarchy employed in giving credit and currency to these "lying wonders."

Of the vast power of the priesthood, especially in Ireland, no question can be entertained. It extends to the imposition of heavy fines, the exaction of large contributions, the infliction of severe corporal punishment, and even to the pronouncing of that dreadful sentence of excommunication, which renders a man an outcast from society in the midst of his family and friends. This power, if it were beneficially exerted, might, without doubt, produce the happiest effects; and that on some occasions it has been so exerted, we have the highest authority for believing. The priests and prelates have done much at different times for the preservation of the public peace, and their fearless and self-denying efforts to alleviate the miseries produced by the late pestilential visitation in that country are beyond all praise. But certainly they have shewn no disposition to employ their almost unlimited influence in producing what even Mr. Wix would consider as "reformation." We might excuse their hostility to Protestant schools, and the vigilance they exercise to prevent the children of Roman Catholics from attending them, if they shewed themselves solicitous to provide, in some other way, adequate

means of education for their flock. We ourselves, as Protestants, would feel extreme reluctance to placing our children in Roman Catholic schools. We must therefore allow that there is nothing peculiarly illiberal, or intolerant, in the repugnance which the priests have manifested in permitting Roman Catholic children to be instructed by Protestant teachers. But is there not strong reason to believe that they are actuated also by a real hostility to the wider diffusion of knowledge, which must follow the general extension of education? Else why do they not more generally institute schools for the instruction of the poor? The pope, it is true, in lately denouncing the heretical schools of Ireland, and prohibiting the attendance of Roman Catholics upon them, has enjoined the general institution of Catholic schools as the wisest and most effectual measure of prevention. We are glad that he felt himself driven to the adoption of this expedient: it is a strong indication of the growth of mind in that country, and of the impossibility, in the estimate of the pope himself, of keeping it in its former state of complete thralldom. But we wait to see what will be done, in consequence of this injunction; and whether the ready obedience, which we doubt not will be paid to the prohibitory part of the rescript, will be accompanied by an equally prompt compliance with the recommendation which it contains for supplying the Catholic population generally with the means of education.

But, quitting this subject for the present, we would advert to another circumstance, which furnishes a strong presumption against the alleged tendency in the Catholic body to reformation; we mean the institution, a few years since, in Dublin, of the Purgatorian Society.*

The object of this Society is to

* See, for an account of this Society, our Vol. for 1812, p. 28.

relieve suffering souls in Purgatory, by the most easy means imaginable; that is, by the members paying a penny a week to procure masses. This institution was formed in the capital of Ireland, and we have not heard that it has been discountenanced by the Romish bishops.

We shall merely cite, in addition to these facts, the plenary indulgence granted by the reigning Pope.

"Pius VII. by Divine Providence, pope, grants unto each, and every one of the faithful of Christ, who after assisting, at least, eight times, at the holy exercise of the mission (in the new cathedral of Cork,) shall confess his or her sins, with true contrition, and approach unto the holy communion; shall devoutly visit the said cathedral chapel, and there offer up to God, for some space of time, pious and fervent prayers for the propagation of the holy Catholic faith, and to the intention of our holy father, a plenary indulgence applicable to the souls in purgatory, by way of suffrage, and this in form of a Jubilee" See Fletcher's Lectures on the Roman Catholic Religion, p. 390.

With these circumstances before us, we fear that there can be no very general wish in Ireland for such a change in the Romish system as deserves the name of reformation.

We do not, however, mean to deny that many persons, even in Ireland, are beginning to awake to the evils of Popery, but it is by means of Protestant exertions; and why not then continue them?

Mr. Wix is yet further of opinion, that a strong argument in favour of the projected council is the amicable and accommodating temper of the pope: he supposes that Pius VII. will not seriously object to, at least, a partial reform, and that these times are, therefore, peculiarly favourable to measures of reconciliation.

We have little desire to detract from the respect which may be due to the character of the reigning pontiff. We are willing to admit that he is personally a very worthy and amiable man. But what has been

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his conduct? Is it such as implies any wish for the reformation of his church, or any willingness to retire, in a single instance, from the path of his predecessors?

With regard to toleration, for example, what are his sentiments?

He has declared (with respect to France,) that the free toleration of other communions is never to be admitted; that it would be contrary to the canons, the councils, and the Catholic religion (*apposto à Canoni, ed al Concilj, e alla Religione Cattolica, al quieto vivere, ed alla felicità dello stato,*) and would even tend to produce disquietude and misery: THEREFORE, 'LO ABBIAMO PURE RIGETTATO,' WE HAVE UTTERLY REFUSED IT!

To the same effect may, perhaps, be cited the injunctions of the pope, addressed to the ecclesiastical authorities in France, renewing the canons which reprobate marriages with heretics. Here, however, it may fairly be alleged, that such a measure is but the exercise of a prudential discipline. We ourselves would be forward to condemn the marriage of any Protestant friend of ours with a Catholic, as likely to produce injurious results to the former. We cannot, therefore, very severely blame a similar conduct arising from a similar fear, on the part of Roman Catholics. We deem the following statement of the Bishop of St. David's to be far more in point.

"Nothing further," says the Bishop of St. David's, "can be necessary to prove the impracticability of union with the Church of Rome, except, perhaps, the claim of spiritual power, and sovereignty over the whole world, which the present pope asserts, that God himself has given him, by which he considers all spiritual authorities, as dependent on him, and by which he rejected from the bosom of the Catholic Church, the patriarch, which the French Government proposed in the year 1808, as the Head of the French Church." p. iv.

Neither is it unimportant to notice what has been done with his sanc-

tion, for the re-establishment of the Inquisition, and the restoration of the Jesuits. Whether the holy tribunals will ever again carry their atrocities to such an extent as was practised in the history of former ages, it would be presumptuous to assert: the pope, in giving them a new existence, has certainly taken care to moderate the severity of their operation;* and far be it from us to take one atom from the praise which such conduct may deserve.

But what shall we say to the restoration of the Jesuits, that insidious and turbulent order, which at no very distant period, was suppressed, even by the authority of Rome itself! Again are these men let loose to overrun "*all states and dominions*:"† and again have they commenced their destructive career, not only in Germany, Hungary, and Poland, but in the very heart of the British dominions. Is it not notorious, that these emissaries are the great bulwark of the Papacy, and the most dangerous, and most determined enemies of the Protestant name?

Look, in the next place, at the bulls which have been issued against Bible Societies, and which serve to throw considerable light upon the temper of Rome. In the first of these instruments, addressed to the primate of Poland, under the date of June, 1816, the pope professes himself to have been "*truly shocked at this most crafty device, by which the very foundations of religion are undermined*:" he is determined to take measures, "*in order to abolish this pestilence as far as possible, this defilement of the faith, most imminently dangerous to souls*;" and although he knows the zeal which his venerable brother has shewn "*to oppose the impious machinations of these innovators*:" yet, he adds, "*in conformity with our office, we again and again*

* See Fletcher's Lectures.

† Pope's Bull, 1814.

exhort you, that whatever you can achieve by POWER, provide for by COUNSEL, or effect by AUTHORITY, you will daily execute, with the utmost earnestness, placing yourself as a wall for the house of Israel."

Such is the general tenor of these recent specimens of papal moderation. Thus far, indeed, some of our Protestant friends in this country would perhaps be inclined to accompany the triple-crowned pontiff. And even when he tells us, that "*Bibles printed by HERETICS are numbered among prohibited books, agreeably to the rules of the Index (No. II. and III.); for it is evident from experience, that the holy Scriptures, when published in the vulgar tongue, have, through the temerity of men, produced more harm than benefit: it is therefore necessary to adhere to the salutary decree of the Congregation of the Index, that no versions of the Bible in the vulgar tongue be permitted, except such as are approved by the apostolic see, or published with annotations, extracted from the writings of the holy fathers of the church;*" we fear that not a few would be found, even of some note in our own Protestant church, who would in this respect go beyond the pope himself, and who would proscribe not merely the Bibles of heretics, but the giving of the authorized Bibles of their own church by the hands of those they deem heretics; who, in short, would be violent against joining with Dissenters to circulate Church-of-England Bibles, as the pope is to prevent the circulation of Protestant Bibles. If, indeed, his hostility to the diffusion of the Scriptures had gone no farther than this, we should have been ready to make some allowance for it. We should have regarded it as admitting of a defence on the same principle on which our bishops would be justified in labouring to prevent the circulation of Roman Catholic or Socinian versions of the Sacred Volume

among the people committed to their charge. But while Protestant Bibles are proscribed, no provision is made for the supply of others. Nay, a clear opinion is given, worthy of a darker, even of the darkest age, that the indiscriminate reading of the Scriptures is highly dangerous; (a language, by the way, which some Protestant divines scruple not to hold in common with the pope of Rome;) and yet whence is the Reformation to come, if not from the Bible?

It is worthy of remark, that in one of the bulls referred to, an appeal is made to the authority of the bull Unigenitus of Clement XI.* a production which, for bigotry and intolerance, has seldom been equalled: as also to Innocent III. as an acknowledged and decisive authority upon the subject; the same Innocent, who in the days of King John, laid this kingdom under an interdict, by which all religious offices were suspended, all the seven sacraments of their church, except baptism, were withheld, and the dead were buried like dogs in the highway, without any funeral solemnity;—the same Innocent, who likewise excited the murderous crusades against the peaceable Waldenses and Albigenses; and who first appointed merciless inquisitors to propagate the religion of Christ by violence and blood. To be brief, the different bulls of the present pope, notwithstanding all that has been said of the suavity of his disposition, have served to accredit some of the worst maxims which the court of Rome has ever promulgated, and have supported or revived some of the most anti-Christian measures which that court has ever promoted.

We repeat, that we have no quarrel with the representation given by Mr. Wix, of the charac-

* The Bull Unigenitus, was directed against a French translation of the New Testament, by the pious Quesnel.

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ter of the present pope ; but how incurable then must be the system, which, in despite of all his amiable feelings and private virtues, and in direct contempt of every principle of gratitude to that Protestant power which restored to him his dignities and honours, could induce such a man not only to applaud but to imitate the worst acts of his worst predecessors ? With these facts looking us in the face, is it, we would ask, in the slightest degree probable, that the Romish priesthood would, for the purpose of uniting with the Church of England, "abandon as errors the doctrines and usages which they have zealously inculcated and defended, and which they are sworn to maintain, *ad supremum vite articulum* ; or that they would renounce any one of the thirteen doctrines and usages before-mentioned ?" (English Reformation, &c. p. 29.) We would not be understood to affirm, that the Roman Catholic religion is incapable of amendment ; but so long as the Council of Trent is to fix its character, we cannot conceive how any great or material change is to be produced. And, in point of fact, it is in no respect changed : there is, at this day, the same rigid adherence to the most preposterous doctrines, and the worst practices and superstitions which disgraced it in the times of our fathers. If it were necessary to cite proofs of these assertions, they might be found in abundance. We might adduce the oath of the Jesuits, which contains a distinct avowal, on the part of the person subscribing it, of his firm belief of the seven sacraments, the exclusive right of the Romish Church to interpret Scripture, transubstantiation, invocation of saints, belief in the power of indulgences, and in the entire supremacy of the Church of Rome over all other churches. Every thing opposed to these tenets they condemn as heretical ; and they solemnly swear to

Christ. Observ. No. 218.

maintain and promulgate them to the utmost of their power.

It may be alleged, indeed, that a great part of the Catholic body is as strongly opposed to the Jesuits, and as much dissatisfied with the pope, for his re-establishment of that order, as the Protestants are ; and that the ablest exposures of the nefarious designs and practices of the Jesuits, have come from the pens of Roman Catholics ; witness the Provincial Letters of Pascal. This is true : but then, let it be recollected, that notwithstanding the light thus thrown on the abominations of the Society of Jesus ; notwithstanding the overwhelming evidence of its corrupt maxims and flagitious conduct, exhibited in the face of Europe, and which produced its consentaneous expulsion from every Catholic state ; and notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of multitudes of Roman Catholics to the measure, the Court of Rome has not scrupled to restore this justly proscribed body to the full possession of its former powers of mischief. And it is between this Court and the Church of England, that Mr. Wix hopes to effect a cordial and beneficial union ! Doubtless the opposition to the Bible Society would be infinitely strengthened by such an alliance, and this circumstance may possibly form one of its recommendations in the eyes of Mr. Wix.

We might further adduce the admonition prefixed to their own revised Catholic translation of the New Testament :—"It was judged necessary to forbid the reading of the Scriptures in the vulgar languages, without the advice and permission of the pastors and spiritual guides whom God has appointed to govern his church. Nor is this due submission to the Catholic Church to be understood of the ignorant and unlearned only, but also of men accomplished in all kinds of learning."

We might also bring forward the

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Index Expurgatorius; the second, third, and fourth rules of which, are referred to in one of the late Bulls against the Bible Society. The object of that index is plainly to exclude every ray of scriptural light from the territories of papal darkness: not only does it condemn all versions of the Bible made by heretics and schismatics, the works of the Reformers, &c. but it proclaims open war against such works as our Spectators and Tatlers; and no adherent of the pope is allowed to peruse them.

We might, in short, fill a volume with proofs of the same kind, which can neither be denied nor explained away: but in place of many similar observations, we shall add merely the following.

"It is often asserted by the advocates of Roman Catholicism, that persecution is not sanctioned by the authority of the Church. In addition to the proofs and reasonings alleged in the Lectures, I beg the reader's attention to the following passage, extracted from the Notes annexed to a folio edition of the Douay Bible, published in Manchester. These Notes are universally acknowledged by the Catholics to contain a true and authentic exposition of the sense attached by the church to the testimony of Scripture. That to which I particularly refer is on Deut. xvii. 8, &c. The text is cited and explained in the first Lecture, pp. 29—31: Let the reader, 'mark, learn, and inwardly digest' the authorized Roman Catholic interpretation. 'Here we see what authority God was pleased to give to the church guides of the Old Testament in deciding, without appeal, all controversies relating to the law; promising that they should not err therein, and punishing with death such as proudly refused to obey their decisions. And surely he has not done less for the church guides of the New Testament!' " See Fletcher's Lectures, p. 396.

And this is the church with which Mr. Wix thinks it possible and expedient to form a union! We fully concur with the Bishop of St. David's, and with the present Pope, that the Church of Rome *cannot* unite with other churches.

"Between the unreformed Church of Rome, then, and the reformed Church of

England, there can be no union. One or other of the churches must cease to be what it is, before there can be union. The bishops and clergy of the Church of Rome being sworn in the profession of their faith to make no change in any of the articles of Pius's Creed, all change and reformation, on her part, are hopeless, and, of course, all union impracticable." Bishop of St. David's Letter, p. 46.

But we are treading on dangerous ground: we are unconsciously exposing ourselves to the charge which Mr. Wix has made upon the Bishop of St. David's, of representing him as friendly to union with Rome unreformed. We have, in express terms, distinctly stated, that such is not the intention of Mr. Wix; neither does the Bishop impute to him any such design. The argument of the Bishop's Letter to Lord Kenyon may be stated briefly thus: "I see no advantage to be derived from the proposed council. Mr. Wix thinks, that mutual concessions may be made: but the nature of the Roman Catholic religion forbids me to indulge any hope of the kind. Look at the doctrines, and the whole history of that church: with such a church, union is impossible." Now, in this there is no misrepresentation. How is the question to be discussed at all, if the sensibilities of the peacemaker will not allow persons to examine the character of the church, with which, under some happy reformation, he proposes to unite? How can the allegations, that the Romish Church has been cruelly calumniated, and that its articles of faith are substantially the same with our own, be answered, but by stating, what its character, and views, and pretensions really are; and not what an ingenious advocate can make of them, or what, under some plastic power hitherto unknown, they might possible become? At all events, this we are fully entitled to require of Mr. Wix, that before he again proposes a union, or even a council for effecting it, he should exhibit to us some proof of a disposition to re-

form, not in a few or even in many individual Roman Catholics, but in the Romish Hierarchy—in the Church of Rome itself.

Mr. Wix thinks that he has a precedent for his plan in the correspondence of Archbishop Wake and the Doctors of the Sorbonne, relative to a proposed union between the English and Gallican Church; and he believes himself to be much misrepresented by the Bishop of St. David's in his remarks on this subject: but neither in this, nor in the other instances of alleged misconception, do we perceive any ground for the charge. The argument on the part of his lordship may be briefly stated thus: "The case of Archbishop Wake is little to the purpose: he required the *separation* of the *Gallican Church* from the Church of Rome, as an essential preliminary step, without which no negotiation could be commenced. You recommend union with the Church of Rome itself, and propose a general council to consider about previous mutual concessions: the Archbishop knew nothing of mutual concessions; he required, in the first instance, a renunciation, on the part of the Gallican Church, of every thing which distinguished their church from our own. That negotiation is therefore no precedent, and affords no argument for this." Mr. Wix does not indeed cite the Archbishop as friendly to union with the *Church of Rome*, which he erroneously supposes to be the construction put upon his words by the Bishop of St. David's: yet he surely considers the Archbishop's correspondence as affording some ground for his own proposal; and we must state, that it appears to us, as well as to Mr. Wix's right reverend opponent, to be of a totally opposite character: the principles upon which it proceeded render it evident to our minds, that the Archbishop would not have listened for a moment to any scheme of union between the Church of Rome and the Church of England.

To those who may wish to know the sentiments of that distinguished prelate, concerning the character of Popery, we would recommend a perusal of the following short section, taken from his Catechism. We do not, however, altogether undertake to justify the manner in which a part of it is written.

"Q. What have been the ill effects of this error?

"A. Chiefly those two which I before mentioned; that it introduced the doctrines of the Mass Sacrifice, and of the Half Communion; to which may be added, thirdly, the Adoration of the Host.

"Q. What do you call the Host?

"A. It is the Wafer which those of the Church of Rome make use of instead of Bread, in this Sacrament.

"Q. Do those of that church adore the consecrated wafer?

"A. They do, and that as if it were really, what they pretend to believe it is; our Saviour Christ himself.

"Q. Is there any great harm in such a worship?

"A. Only the sin of idolatry; for so it must needs be, to give Divine worship to a piece of bread.

"Q. Ought not Christ to be adored in this sacrament?

"A. Christ is every where to be adored; and therefore in the receiving of the holy communion, as well as in all our other religious performances.

"Q. How can it then be sinful for those who believe the bread to be changed into the body of Christ, upon that supposition, to worship the host?

"A. As well as for a heathen, who believes the sun to be God, upon that supposition to worship the sun.

"Q. But he intends to worship Christ, and that can never be justly said to be idolatry.

"A. And so the other intends to worship God. But to put another case, which may more easily be understood: If a man will, in defiance of sense and reason, believe a post to be his father; and, upon that supposition, ask blessing of a post; does his

opinion, or rather his madness, alter the nature of things, and make him ever the less ask blessing of a post, because he takes that post to be his father? The Papist will needs have a piece of bread to be Christ's body; and, upon that presumption, he pays Divine honour to it. Does he ever the less give Divine honour to a piece of bread, because he fancies that bread to be the body of Christ?

"Q. Will not his intention direct his action aright?

"A. No, it will not: or if it would, his very intention itself is wrong. For his intention is to adore the host. 'Tis true, he believes it to be Christ's body; and therefore adores it: but still, right or wrong, the host he adores; which being in reality no more than bread, he must needs commit idolatry in adoring of it." Wake's Catechism, pp. 168—170.

It has already been stated, that the mode suggested by Mr. Wix of promoting unanimity in the proposed council, and of ascertaining the true faith and usages of the church, is that of referring to primitive times.—Now, if neither the Church of Rome nor the Church of England had ever thought of appealing to the records of the early ages, and if men could be brought candidly to examine the writings of the fathers, the hope might possibly be indulged that something would be effected. But the fact is indisputable, that both churches appeal with great confidence to antiquity: and is it probable that either of them will retract the sentiments which it has hitherto maintained as the primitive doctrines, merely in compliment to the other?

With respect to the Church of England, we shall cite only the words of Bishop Jewell.

"We have done nothing in the changing of religion either insolently or rashly; nothing but with great deliberation and slowly: nor had we ever thought of doing it, except the will of God undoubtedly and manifestly opened to us in the most sacred Scriptures, and the necessity of our salvation, had compelled us so to do; for although we have departed from that church which they call the Catholic Church, and thereupon they have kindled a great envy against

us, in them who cannot well judge of us; yet it is enough for us, and ought to be so to any prudent and pious man, who considers seriously of his salvation, that we have only departed from that church which may err, which Christ, who cannot err, so long since foretold would err, and which we see clearly with our eyes has departed from the holy fathers, the Apostles, Christ himself, and the primitive and Catholic Church; and we have approached, as much as possibly we could the Church of the Apostles and ancient Catholic bishops and fathers, which we know was yet a perfect church, not contaminated with any idolatry or great and public error. Neither have we only reformed the doctrine of our church, and made it like theirs in all things, but we have also brought the celebration of the sacraments, and the form of our public rites and prayers, to an exact resemblance with their institutions or customs.—And so we have only done that which we know Christ himself, and all pious and godly men, have in all ages ever done; for we have brought back religion which was foully neglected and depraved by them, to her original and first state; for we considered that the reformation of religion was to be made by that which was the first pattern of it; for this rule will ever hold good against the heretics, saith the most ancient father Tertullian, *That that is true which is first, and that is adulterated and corrupted which is later.* (See Fathers of the Church, Jewell, p. 103.)

And what say the Romanists?

"The Papist, truly represented," says Gother, one of their ablest advocates, "believes that nothing is to have place in his creed but what was taught by Christ and his Apostles, and has been delivered and taught in all ages by the church of God, the congregation of all true believers, and has been so delivered down to him through all ages."* There is therefore no superstition, which,

* Fletcher's Lectures, p. 53.

according to their view of things, is not confirmed by the general view of the fathers.

All antiquity, for instance, allows men to invoke the saints.

"Whether they may know our wants and desires by the ministry of angels, who, according to the said Scriptures, are established by God as his agents in the works of his providence, or whether God himself may make our petitions known to them; the Church contents herself with asserting, in consonance with all antiquity, that to pray to them is good and useful." Wix's Letter, p. 32.

"That the saints do intercede for us with God, is a dogma of Revelation, positively taught by the Council of Trent, supposed in the second Council of Nice, founded on antiquity, and the New Testament, proved by the unanimous teaching of the fathers, especially by the uniformity of the orthodox, or schismatic Liturgies, of the fifth age." (Discussion Amicale.) Ibid. p. 57.

All antiquity is for the supremacy of the Pope.

The Catholic doctrine is, "that St. Peter was head of the church under Christ; that the pope or bishop of Rome is at present head of the church, and Christ's vicar on earth. How do we prove these propositions? By the unanimous consent of the fathers, and the tradition of the church." (Pope Pius's Creed, &c. p. 88. Fletcher's Lectures.)

And there is no question, that if a Papist be not over scrupulous about the sort of antiquity to which he appeals, he is authorized to plead antiquity. This subject was long since taken up by Ponet, the learned bishop of Winchester, in a work of which Strype has given us a detailed account. The passage which follows is both amusing and instructing.

"This book ends with the names of a number of old heretics condemned in the church of God, out of whose heresies, opinions and errors in doctrine, and strange behaviour in manners, diet, vesture and life, the Papists have gathered their opinions

and rules; whereby they had framed and couched together the whole body of their popish and heretical learning; as it was sufficiently proved by the testimony of old doctors and ancient writers, in a part of his book, where their sundry opinions and behaviour, and the opinions and behaviour of the popish sect, were so compared and joined together, that the reader might easily perceive how Popery is one most pestilent heresy, as the author said, mingled and made up of a multitude of other perilous and blasphemous heresies. This task Ponet undertook, because his adversary had been so liberal in calling the professors of the Gospel heretics, and speaking much how heresy and impurity went together: therefore had Ponet spent one long chapter in his book, in joining with Martin and all the rest of his sect, for trial, as he said, whether of the two were most worthy of the name of heretic. Having notably performed this, at the conclusion of his book, by way of a table, he sets down the names of some of the old heretics, of whom he charged the Papists to have gathered their opinions, and the years of our Lord when they lived, and the references to the pages, where the reader might find their agreement with the Papists. The list of these heretics is as follows:—Simon Magus, Ebion, Basilides, Carpocrates, Saturninus, Gnostici, Valentinus, Secundus, &c.: and so he proceeded, naming no less than one and fifty heretics; reaching to the heretics in the fifth century, namely, to the year 449. And then this conclusion he sets down at the end: 'The church which the Papists say is of Catholics, is proved by the doctors a flock of heretics.' " (See Strype's Memorials, vol. V. p. 62.)

Such was the opinion of Ponet: but we have, moreover, little doubt that a good popish casuist would be able to make any of the fathers speak whatever language he pleased. The popish objection to the free use of the

Scriptures, that there are many things in them hard to be understood; that men wrest them to any sense which suits their fancy; "that Arius, Nestorius, and such other heretics, did allege the Scriptures for their doctrines as the Catholics did, depraving the true sense, which is only known by the tradition and consent of the Catholic Church, so that the one without the other is not a direction but a seduction to a simple man;"* would apply with equal force to the Protestant interpretation of the fathers. The Roman Catholic would affix his own sense to them, and, however absurdly, to this he would adhere. When Christopherson reproached Philpot with his ignorance of the fathers, Philpot replied, "That it was a shame for them to wrest and wreath the doctors as they did, to maintain a false religion; and that the doctors were altogether against them, if they took them aright; and that it was indeed their false packing of doctors together, had given him and others occasion to look upon them. Whereby we find you, said he, shameful liars and misrepresenters of the ancient doctors."

With so many obstacles in the way of conciliation and mutual concession, we cannot but consider the project of Mr. Wix as absolutely hopeless: and, were it practicable, we are not convinced of its expediency.

"If a union," observes the Bishop of St. David's, "were to be made by any thing short of an entire abandonment of all the corruptions from which the Church of England *emancipated* itself in the sixteenth century; if it were made by any compromise of the truth on our part; instead of extinguishing schism, we should inflame it in a tenfold degree. The old Puritans separated from our church, because they thought that we retained too much of Popery in our services. What would their descendants think—what would many of our own most zealous Protestant friends think—if, by Mr. Wix's plan of *mutual*

concessions, we were to re-admit any of the doctrines and usages, against which our pious and martyred Reformers protested; and which, no doubt, the Roman Catholics in Council would most pertinaciously retain?" Letter, p. 29.

This reasoning is so manifestly just, that it must approve itself to the judgment of every reflecting person.

The mere fact of such a council being assembled would excite very serious alarm among all classes of our population. The clergy, if they were supposed to countenance the measure, would be esteemed by multitudes of their people as unfaithful to the trust reposed in them: and whatever cause might gain, the Church of England would suffer. The breaking up of the council without a compromise would but increase the evil, which it was intended to remove: and, in our judgment, no compromise could the Church of England obtain without concessions which would be fatal to her character.

We have no hesitation in expressing our clear conviction, that under present circumstances a more mischievous scheme could hardly be devised. Has Mr. Wix attended to the progress which the Roman Catholic superstitions have made among us during the last few years? The subject is of great importance in itself: and it is peculiarly important with respect to the argument before us.

In the year 1781, there were only three Roman Catholic schools of any consequence throughout all England and Wales: at present it appears that there are not less than fifty, and some of them of considerable magnitude.* The number of chapels is stated to be, on a fair computation, about 900: most of which have been erected in the course of the last thirty years. Many of them are capacious and magnificent: the chapel

* Sermon by Watson, one of Queen Mary's preachers.

* For a list of the chief Roman Catholic establishments in Great Britain, see our Vol. for 1818, p. 91.

at Glasgow cost above 13,000*l.* and that at Moorfields is said to be on a scale still more extensive.

In 1780, the number of Roman Catholics in Great Britain was stated at 69,376; an estimate, however, which we must consider as falling far below the truth. At present, it is said to be about 500,000. But whatever be the exact comparative numbers at these different periods, there has undoubtedly been a very large increase in the last forty years, owing to emigrations from Ireland, and other causes.

The account given of the Jesuit College at Stonyhurst is not calculated to do away the impression which these statements ought generally to produce. There are, it seems, about 1100 acres of land attached to the college, which the Jesuits keep in their own hands, and farm themselves: they consume the produce of the land in the college, and also make large purchases in addition from the farmers and graziers for many miles round, thus augmenting their influence, and diffusing their principles more widely throughout the country. They have suitable offices for a variety of tradesmen; receive pupils from various parts of the Continent, from Ireland, and different parts of Great Britain: their present number of pupils may be from 200 to 300, and the general average for the last twenty-five years cannot, it is said, have fallen short of that number.—For these and further particulars, our readers may refer to our vol. for 1818, p. 92.

To these statements it may be added, that the Papists are said to have the command of several of the Irish journals and presses, and even of one or two of the daily newspapers in London; and that they regularly publish three monthly miscellaneous magazines, besides contributing occasionally to other periodical publications.

We would submit the case to any intelligent individuals, whether the

mischiefs likely to result from the proposed council do not assume a more fearful appearance when connected with the circumstances which have here been noticed? What the emissaries of Rome have hitherto effected in this island has been done mainly in *opposition* to the general feelings of the country; and some doubtless have been prevented from joining their ranks by observing the opinion entertained of them by our Protestant Church. But how many of the checks, which have hitherto retarded their progress, would by the mere convening of a council be at once done away! Would not the people generally suppose, that by our own tacit acknowledgments, we do not consider the difference between the two churches as essential? Would not the Roman Catholic priest know how to turn this feeling to account, with all the force which he could derive from the assertion, that his church is, by the admission of Protestants themselves, a true church, while Papists do not entertain the same judgment concerning the Church of England?

We forbear to press the argument farther: but if the council were to be convened, the time would probably not be very remote, when the colleges and academies of the Roman Catholics would be increased tenfold, and be filled with recruits from our Protestant population. We have been accustomed to think so lightly of “rouge and songe, of the mumbling, murmuring, and piteously pewling forth of responds and versicles for the souls of our Christian brethren and sistern departed out of this world;”^{*}—we have paid so little attention to “my Lady Mass,” since she announced her intended but unwilling departure from this kingdom, with

“Help and defend, my good brethren all,
Which love doctrine cathedral,

^{*} King Henry's Primer.

And do believe unwritten veritie,
To be as good as Scriptures' sinceritie :
Because in the Bible I cannot be found,
The hereticks would bury me under the
ground.

I pray you hartily, yf it be possible,
To get me a place in the Great Bible :
Or else, as I do understand,
I shall be banished out of this land :
And shall be compelled with sinne and
payne,
To return to Rome to my father again ;"

—we have deemed likewise so irreverently of the proverbial faith of the Collier, ("Fides Carbonaria," for a definition of which, see Christ. Observ. 1817, p. 441.) that we live without any apprehension of the return of such follies. But if we are to be led away by a spurious charity, the evil may be nearer than we suspect: some of us may live to be the disciples of the "mewlers and pewlers," to profess the faith of the Collier, to be delighted with the splendor of the mass, and to believe ourselves edified by a service, of which not one word do we understand.

Mr. Wix, however, is of opinion, that the benefits to be derived from the union of the Church of England and the Church of Rome, on the principle of mutual concessions, are of no ordinary magnitude.

It will tend, he thinks, 1st, To promote religious peace and unanimity in the flock of Jesus Christ. (Reflections, p. 79.)

We consider the two churches as far too widely disjointed to warrant such a conclusion.

2d, "Persons might then cease to consider themselves justified in their separate communion, from the example of the great Protestant Church of England."

We do not imagine that Dissenters lay much stress upon this argument: and even if they did, it would scarcely be desirable to hazard so fearful an experiment merely to deprive them of it.

"Mr. Wix states the nature of this great

schism very incorrectly. He makes it not an act of the Pope, but of the Church of England. And to distinguish it from the schism of our Dissenters, he says it is not a separation from the church, but a separation from error. But this does not mark the difference between us and our Dissenters; for they, no doubt, make the same plea. The schism of the sixteenth century, in this country, was an act of the Pope: it commenced with the Pope's insolent summons of Henry VIII to Rome; and, as Mr. Butler observes, was consummated by the Pope's Bull. The difference between us and our Dissenters consists in this, that we left no mother church, but adhered to the Church of England, and restored the ancient faith and government of the Church." Bishop of St. David's Letter, p. 51.

The reader may possibly expect, as an additional benefit, the prospect of gaining over the Dissenters; especially as Mr. Wix states generally, that the want of union in matters of religion has long been very seriously lamented by him. It appears, however, that his design is to comprehend those alone, who maintain already the episcopal form of church government: the Dissenters come not under his contemplation.

"No: the union desired is not between members of the church and schismatics; not between those who acknowledge Christ and those who acknowledge him not; but between the Church of Rome and the Church of England, if indeed they may be designated as churches under different names. Union is not, indeed, nor ought to be desired, between the true apostolical church, and those who renounce apostolical discipline—between the believers in the only Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the professors of his holy sacraments; and those who deny the Atonement and despise the sacraments; but union between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, on proper Christian grounds, might, under the blessing of Almighty God, happily prevail with many to renounce their infidelity, or, what is worse than infidelity, their unmanly indifference; to arouse from their slumber, and to unite themselves in the bond of Christian love under their common Master Jesus Christ—blessed for evermore!" Reflections, pp. x, xi.

The schismatic spirit of the day, which, we think, he exceedingly overrates, he represents himself as viewing with "*horror*;" (p. 38 of *Reflections*;) a strong term, and not very closely allied to conciliation. "No sound Catholic," he tells us, "whether of the Church of Rome, or of the Church of England, can unite with Protestants while they refuse to be under the discipline of the church, or to bow to its faith." *Reflections*, p. 63.

And again :

"Whatever may be the errors of the Church of Rome, they are not, in the view of the writer, so alarming, nor should they be, in the view of any sound member of the Church of England, as the errors of the Socinians, the Anabaptists, the Quakers, and others, who reject episcopal discipline, and depart widely from apostolical faith. For, the Church of Rome has the foundation of true faith, and the advantages of a discipline modelled after apostolical practice. A conference, therefore, with her, by the Church of England, now that the heat of the Reformation has, in a great degree, subsided, might, under Almighty Blessing given to fervent prayer, be the happy means of leading to the renunciation of error, and of bringing about a Christian union, which might restrain the alarming progress of that unscriptural variety of opinion which prevails, to the great injury of our common religion.

"The members of the Church of England, and many Protestant Dissenters, have, indeed, in their creeds and books of devotion, the true faith; but they are deficient in zeal and sincerity, in maintaining the articles of their creed, and preserving them in purity from the impieties of the Socinian, of the Quaker, and of the numerous other sects; impieties far more injurious to Gospel Truth than the errors attaching to the Roman Catholic Faith." *Reflections*, pp. 94, 95.

Now without going into the inquiry, whether the episcopal form of church government is so absolutely essential, that none can be considered as within the pale of Christ's visible church, who have not adopted it;

Christ. Observ. No. 218.

without discussing the question whether the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge has not done irreparable injury to the faith, by committing its cause in the East Indies to Lutheran Missionaries; and whether all classes of Dissenters, even those who hold the doctrines of the Church of England, are to be ranked among the "*schismatics*," who acknowledge not Christ, and despise his sacraments; (although our own opinion is at utter variance with that which appears to be the sentiment of Mr. Wix;) we would simply ask, Why should you not attempt to bring over to the Established Church, those who maintain substantially the same creed, but who have not adopted the apostolical discipline? Mr. Wix has, on this point, virtually fallen into the sort of error which he imputes to the Bishop of St. David's. "I cannot unite with schismatics." But if you can gain them to the church, they are no longer schismatics. Cannot you unite with them when they are properly reformed? And why should you not attempt their reformation? In fact, every argument which Mr. Wix adopts as conclusive against union with these *schismatics*, while they are out of the pale of the church, is totally misplaced and irrelevant. Instead of seeking to unite the Churches of England and Rome as a remedy against schism,—

"would it not be much more natural and charitable and Christian-like, to devise some means, if possible, of recovering to the Church the various denominations of Dissenters in England and Ireland, and of the Kirk of Scotland? Mutual concessions might be more practicable with them, than with the Church of Rome; a very large portion of the Dissenters being what are called orthodox Dissenters, and none of them having to look higher for the origin of their dissent than the sixteenth century, and a very small portion of them differing from us in the essentials of their faith. The condition of union with them, as with the Roman Catholics, must be unity of

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faith and discipline."* Bishop of St. David's, p. 30.

We cannot but express our surprise at the marked difference of tone manifested by Mr. Wix towards many classes of Protestants on the one hand, and towards the Roman Catholics on the other ;—a tone which, in the former case, appears to be not very consistent with that charity which hopeth and believeth all things ; and in the latter is but little after the example of our best and most venerated divines. We do not object to a spirit of kindness and conciliation, wherever it can be shewn without sacrificing the interests of truth ; but the language of Mr. Wix goes much beyond the limit which we should wish to prescribe to ourselves. "I am hurt," he remarks, "when I hear you charged with idolatry for invoking them, (namely, angels or departed saints,) or with detracting from the merits of Christ."—"No church could have been more careful than yours has been to inculcate confidence in God and the mediatorship of Christ," &c. (Reflections, p. 23.) "The Roman Catholics, it is believed, are greatly misunderstood, and cruelly calumniated;" (p. xxxviii.) ; "The errors and improprieties of the Church of Rome ;" "The practices of the Church of Rome, however erroneous they are supposed to be, &c." "Errors such as the Church of England considers them, &c." "Many are zealous in untruly charging upon the Church of Rome idolatry." "The writer cannot agree with those, who, in an intemperate zeal, have as uncharitably as absurdly stated the Church of Rome to be the anti-christian power. How can that church be called anti-christian, which recites in her services the same creeds, the

same prayers, and the same divine Psalms, as the Church of England does? The writer is hurt whenever he notices so cruel a charge, from whatever high authority."

In reference to these and similar observations of Mr. Wix, the Bishop of St. David's justly remarks, that it is difficult to believe that we are reading the work of a member of the same church with Bishops Jewell, Usher, Taylor, Stillingfleet, Wake, Bull, &c. : and the thought has frequently occurred to us, how much and how often the feelings of the writer would have been hurt, if he had lived with the Reformers ! There is scarcely one of them, whom he would not have had reason to rebuke as a propagator of cruel and uncharitable accusations. Luther must appear to him to be perfectly outrageous, and very little better was the editor of one of his sermons. A man who could exhort his readers "to lift up their eyes and behold the abomination of idolatry so shamefully used in those days, and not only used, but with force and maine fortified and upholden with fire and faggot, crudelity and strength ; and so sore upholden, that the eternal word of God is clearly banished ;" and who could further describe the mass as "the most shameful mass and gazing stock, the wicked mass, the offspring of satan, the invention of the devil, the fair fruit of the Romish ravening antichrist and the laze-house of all his shaven posterity ;" whatever justice there might be in his statements, would give pain to feelings far less acute than those of Mr. Wix. Our own Reformers are of a moderate cast : but we should be glad to know what Mr. Wix would have thought of the following persons, if he had heard them deliver the sentiments subjoined to their several names.

Coverdale.—"That he (Edward VI) was most godly occupied, and continued in stopping up the gaps that antichrist and his false doctrine

* Mr. Wix's Reply, p 81 of his Letter to the Bishop of St. David's, appears to us not to touch the argument : we still say, could not the attempt be made ? And if you will try conciliation, why not begin with Protestants ?

had made in the vineyard of the Lord, and in building again the walls of his house, which through *idolatry*, superstition, evil example, and horrible abuses had been broken down."

Philpot.—"He answered them, that if the clergy could prove their sacrament of the altar to be a sacrament, or themselves to be of the *true church of Christ*, he promised he would be conformable to all their doings."

Taylor.—"That transubstantiation is a conjuring word; and that the bishop of Rome is against God; and that he made by a juggling word the body and blood of Christ of bread and wine, and that to worship it with honour due to God is *idolatry*."

"After long disputations, the Bishop (Gardiner,) asked him again whether he would return to the unity of the Catholic Church? He answered that he would not come to *antichrist's church*."

Rogers.—"My lord, where you say, ye willed me to rise again with you, and so to come to the unity of Christ's Church, I take you by those your words, that you willed me to fall; for I do understand the church otherwise than you do: for I do understand the church of Christ, and you do understand the Romish Church of *antichrist*. And I say, that the pope's church, which you believe, is the church of *antichrist*."

Hooper.—"Et si illi (Petro) et aliis totius ecclesiæ curam Christus principaliter concessisset, nihil *Romani antichristi* partes adjuvaret."

"Saying also, that the mass is the iniquity of the devil, and that the mass is an *idol*."

Bale.—"But whereas they report our communion to have a popish face, I desire you to mark that which followeth here, and to judge their independency. To that face chiefly belongeth a monstrous brothel or ape of *antichrist*, with shaven crowns, side-gowns, oil in thumbs, tippet, portas and mass book. Our communion hath none such." "That execrable *antichrist*."

Ridley.—"They delivered him to the executioners to be burnt alive, for no other crime than that he asserted, that Christ being true man had a fixed and not uncertain seat in heaven; and attributed to him the supreme government on earth against the Roman *antichrist*."

Latimer.—"O good Lord! what a damnable act have you done! you have changed the holy communion into a most wicked and horrible sacrifice of *idolatry*."

"But although the holy Ghost appointed them no living for their mass-saying in God's book, yet have they appointed themselves a living in *antichrist's* decrees."

"He (Latimer) bade the lay-people to go away from the forged sacrifices, and choose whether they would ride to the devil with *idolaters*, or go to heaven with Christ and his members, by bearing his cross."

Cranmer.—"And now I come to the great thing, which so much troubleth my conscience, &c." (his subscription to different popish papers, to save his life :) "and forasmuch as my hand offended contrary to my heart, my hand shall first be punished therefore. For may I come to the fire, it shall be first burnt: and as for the pope, I refuse him as Christ's enemy and *antichrist*, with all his false doctrine, &c."

Such was the testimony of Cranmer, in St. Mary's, Oxford, just before his burning: "And more he would have spoken of the sacrament and of the papacy, but that they bade stop his mouth, and pull him down." The Romish priests were exceedingly hurt to hear the pope so cruelly calumniated.

We cannot resist one additional quotation, on the same authority* from which the others are taken, because it expresses, not the sentiments of one individual, however exalted, but of the chief bishops and preachers under confinement in Queen Mary's days: it forms part

* Strype.

of a confession of faith, to which they subscribed their names.

"Purgatory, masses, &c. are the doctrine of *antichrist*." "The mutilation of the sacrament, and the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the adoration of the bread, &c. is *anti-christian*."

If Mr. Wix's feelings are so much pained by occasional sentiments of this sort, couched in the language of our polished and courtly times, what would he have felt had he lived at the rugged period of the Reformation? We can assure him, that we do not mean to insinuate any suspicion of his principles; but with the venerable fathers of our church, he could not have associated without great personal discomfort: and we wish that some portion of that charity, which he has exercised in so remarkable a degree toward the Roman Catholics, had been manifested towards his Protestant countrymen, who hold, in effect, the same faith with himself.* But to return from this digression—

A main object, which the projected union of the Churches of England and Rome, through the medium of mutual concessions, is intended to accomplish, is the destruction of the Bible Society. Mr. Wix seems on this subject to sympathize with the "amiable" person, whom he compliments with the title of "his holiness;" and is truly shocked at this "most crafty device," as that same person calls it—"this pestilence," "this defilement of the faith"—and asserts, in terms equally strong with those of the Bishop of Rome himself, that "the very foundations of religion are undermined by it." He believes that the Bible Society is the

* We are not defending some of the language, which we have quoted; for it is very certain, that "the wrath of man, worketh not the righteousness of God," and that no religious benefit is gained by the use of hard names. We are only exhibiting the *sentiments* of the writers.

grand modern engine of schism and religious insubordination; that it tends to neutralize all the exterior forms, as well as all the peculiar doctrines of Christianity; that it superinduces a grand system of indifference to the genuine interests of the Gospel; that our reverend and right reverend clergy give, in this unhappy association, the great influence of it to Socinians, to Quakers, and to any and every impugner of the Christian doctrines and sacraments; that this communication tends to a compromise of sound doctrine, and is inconsistent with that honest zeal with which we are to contend for the faith, &c. &c. As amidst many charges of this sort, we find little that is new, or that has not been satisfactorily and repeatedly answered; as it is well known that the one, simple, unmixed object of the Bible Society is, by means of general contributions, to put men into possession of the Word of God; as it is now admitted that it circulates no other religious publications, maintains no schools, and supports no missions, but devotes the whole of its funds to the distribution of the Scriptures, there seems to be little room for disputation. Mr. Wix's assertions are, for the most part, perfectly gratuitous; and if, in any case, he appears to speak from personal knowledge, he must permit us to say, that the concurrent testimony of many clergymen of the Church of England, and some of the Church of Rome, is decisively against him. The fact is notorious, that in places where the Bible Society has been established, and especially where Bible Associations have flourished, not only are the churches better filled than they formerly were, but there seems to be, with the increasing intelligence of the lower classes, an increasing regard to the great truths of religion. No institutions have been assailed by the disaffected "radicals" with greater bitterness than Bible Societies.

There is, however, one passage, which we cannot dismiss without a few observations.

"It was not contemplated by the early Reformers, who, disgusted with the multifarious errors of boasted tradition, asserted, that 'holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so, that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith;' that the time would arrive, when every individual, with the Bible in his hands, would consider himself qualified and justified to form his own faith, and to reject all that had been concluded on in the piety and learning of his ancestors, which did not accord with his own notions; but now this folly, this pride, this worse than folly and pride united, has prevailed to the alarming extent, that each person considers himself at full liberty to form or to choose whatever faith he pleases, and to deny doctrines, however plainly revealed, which are above his comprehension. Thus, in the profaneness of reason, unchastised by the admonition and teaching of Divine revelation and ancient persuasion, the prominent articles of Christian faith, are denied by those who call themselves the disciples of the meek and humble Jesus." *Reflections*, p. 80.

The opponents of the Bible Society are, in one respect, extremely unfortunate, that they adopt arguments very similar to those, which the Papists formerly used against the free use of the Scriptures themselves. "These heretics will be still doing in the Scriptures. A shoemaker, a cobbler, a taylor, a boy not yet twenty years of age, shall not stick to reprove that a learned man of forty years' study shall affirm in the declaration of God's word. Oh! how godly were the people disposed, when they knew nothing of the Scripture, but as they were taught by profound clerks and well-learned men!"* Mr. Wix, perhaps, means to say nothing of the kind; but has not his argument something of this tendency? Whether is the force of it derived from the *constitution of the*

Bible Society, or from the *enlarged circulation of the Scriptures*?

The passage is doubtless intended against the Society: and as no discrimination is made, it applies to the whole Society; to the members of the Establishment, as well as to others. Is it true, then, that such are the views and sentiments of the bishops and clergy, who support that institution? Or do they encourage such conduct in others? Where will Mr. Wix find more faithful advocates for the church to which they belong; more determined enemies of heresy and idolatry; more assiduous preachers; more enlightened and zealous champions for the faith once delivered to the saints? Are these the usual symptoms of that spirit of indifference, and of those latitudinarian principles, which are so fearlessly ascribed to them?

Indeed, we think that Mr. Wix is not wholly insensible to the force of these considerations. He knows that, in London at least, if the inquiry were made, In what places of worship belonging to the church do you find the most crowded, intelligent, and devout congregations? the friends of the Bible Society need to be under no apprehension for the result. How then is the matter to be explained? It is only to hold up to reproach, as schismatics and evangelicals,* the ministers of crowded churches; it is only to substitute the word enthusiasm for indifference, and—a truce with consistency—the business is done.

"Unfortunately, schism does not prevail merely out of the church; it abounds within it. It has been observed, in the

* If the cause were less serious, it would be quite amusing to observe with what vehemence the men, who exclaim against others, as arrogating to themselves the exclusive knowledge of the Gospel, protest that *they*, and *they alone*, interpret the Scriptures aright;—how zealously they urge the claim, which, in the same breath, they condemn.

* Supplication of the Commons.—*Strype*.

course of the foregoing reflections, that, among those who profess themselves to be members of the church, very little attachment to it is found. It is, moreover, most seriously to be deplored, that very many of those, who boast of the warmest attachment to her doctrines, have arrogated to themselves the knowledge of the Gospel, in a sense which excludes all others from a due conception of it, whose opinions or feelings accord not with their own.

"In order to convince ourselves that these persons are not sound or consistent members of the church, nor sincere admirers of her apostolical ministry, we may observe, that, however they crowd to any church where there is what they call Evangelical or Gospel preaching, they do, if they find it not in the church, notoriously resort to meeting-houses, where they do find it, but where the ministry is not episcopal, nor can be traced in authorized succession from the Apostles." *Reflec.* pp. 99, 100.

The charge contained in the first paragraph of the preceding quotation, is wholly unsupported by proof. If the author had said, that very many of those who boast of the warmest attachment to the church *traduce* their brethren as schismatics, it would probably be more correct, and the proof not very far to seek.

The charge in the second paragraph is explicable upon other principles than those of schism. From some cause, either in the constitution of the human mind, or in the mode of their education, men are found generally in a free country to attach greater value to the *doctrines*, than to the *discipline* and *government* of religious societies, and to think more of the sermon than of the prayers. The admirable plan suggested by the Bishop of St. David's, for introducing into our schools an "Authorized Formulary of Church Principles, supplementary to the Catechism, and forming an indispensable part of National Education," might tend to keep numbers in the Establishment, who might otherwise be induced to leave it: yet it is still very possible that if one of these dissenting teachers, who, according to Mr. Wix's admission, agree with

the church in doctrine, and have the true faith in their creeds and books of devotion, should come into a neglected parish, some persons might be induced to leave the Church and go to the Meeting. And it should not perhaps be imputed as a very serious crime to the zealous and orthodox successor of such a clergyman, if he brought back the wanderers to the fold. It is certainly very possible, notwithstanding this result of his labours, or even a subsequent defection under a great change of circumstances, that he may not be a schismatic.

We shall not, it is hoped, commit any grievous offence against the laws of Christian forbearance, if we express our concern that Mr. Wix has not acted with more fairness upon this subject of the Bible Society, than we conceive him to have done. Can he seriously believe, that the existence of this institution has prevented Roman Catholics from renouncing their errors; (see Letter to the Bishop, p. 95;) or that, in expressing their alarm for the discipline and faith of the Christian church, they were terrified for any thing but *Roman Catholic discipline* and *Roman Catholic faith*? Is it for the *Protestant faith*, the faith of HERETICS, the faith of the *Gospel of Christ*, that the pope has been alarmed? Is it for this that he has hurled the thunders of the Vatican; for this that he has endeavoured to displace Baron Von Wessenberg, and appealed to such authorities as Clement XI. and Innocent III.? If "his holiness" were to assure us of it in his own proper person, we should be tempted almost to doubt his infallible word.

Another instance of this want of fairness, and the last which we shall adduce, occurs in the Letter to the Bishop of St. David's.

"In one capacity, the churchmen of the Society do pray for the conversion of Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics; and, in ano-

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ther capacity, they declare, with much boasting, that persons by joining the Society may become fraternal members of a Society of Christ,* for a pecuniary consideration, without requiring the possession of any of those qualifications which the church deems essential to the character of Christians." Reflections, p. 85.

The authority which he cites is that of an Irish writer, occupied in the same cause with himself; and so implicitly does Mr. Wix rely upon him, that he copies his errors. The Icelandic Address is not in the Number for January, 1818, but in that for 1817. This circumstance is not unimportant; for in proving that Mr. Wix had not turned to the Number, it proves further concerning the charge against the advocates of the Society, which makes them declare, *with much boasting*, that persons, by joining the Society, become fraternal members of a SOCIETY OF CHRIST, (the words in italics being, so far as we can find, entirely his own,) was made without the slightest examination into its truth. Our readers, by referring to that Number, will see that there is no ground for it: there is no declaration of the sort by any advocate, much less by the advocates generally, as if this were a common crime: there is no boasting of any kind: the address is a poetical address by the Icelandic translator of Milton, and it is introduced merely with a statement of that fact. So, if a poor Icelandic, and that Icelandic a poet, in the fulness of his gratitude to a Christian Society, which had bestowed upon him and his countrymen the word of God, should give way to his feelings and his love of song, and express his thanks, in warm terms, for this inestimable blessing, it is to be imputed to the Society as a grievous offence; and the mere insertion of it, as a literary curiosity in a periodi-

cal work, is to be visited upon all the friends of that institution! they are even to be accused of making assertions, *with much boasting*, which assertions were never made at all.

Mr. Wix complains that persons like himself, have been *cruelly calumniated* by the friends of the Society. Supposing his statement to be correct, although we know that it has been frequently made without the shadow of a foundation, we would beg leave to ask, what has been the treatment experienced by the patrons of that institution in the first instance? Have they not been represented as pursuing objects of the most nefarious tendency; as aiming at the subversion of all that is sacred and venerable in the land? Have they not been held up to public scorn and contempt, under every designation which the bad passions of their adversaries could invent and devise? Can an instance be cited, in modern times, where so much shameless misrepresentation and flagrant abuse have been levelled at any class of men as at the advocates and clerical members of the Bible Society? Let their other qualifications be what they may; let them own all the articles of the creed, and believe and live according to the holy Scriptures; let them be as zealous for the discipline of the church as they are faithful to its doctrines; yet, if they approve of the Bible Society, they are enemies of the church which supports, and to the religion of the country which protects them: they are scarcely a whit better than were the ancient opponents of the mass in the eyes of the Papists—"Christians no longer, but mere Turks, who are laying a plot for the great Turk to overrun Christendom." And can it be matter of surprise if men thus assailed and calumniated, should sometimes express themselves with warmth against those who so strangely misrepresent them? If they see the very same arguments used against the circulation of the

* So the Society is called in the Christian Observer, for January, 1818; article, *The Address of the Island of Iceland to the British and Foreign Bible Society.*"

Scriptures by the Bible Society, and applied in the same way which the Papists adopt against the circulation of the Scriptures at all, is it an unpardonable offence in them to point out the coincidence? If they find tradition put, as nearly as possible, upon the same level with the Bible, or be almost deafened with exclamations about the dangers resulting to the simple hearted from reading the word of God without the interpretation of the church, is it calumny to remark that the Roman Catholics are much of the same opinion?*

Mr. Wix, conceiving himself to have been represented by the Bishop of St. David's as friendly to union with the unreformed Church of Rome, is exceedingly disturbed at the circumstance. "Is not the charge," he asks, "of a most serious nature? Ought not any bishop to pause, and gravely to consider in charity, in common justice, how injurious such a charge, so preferred, may be to the influence which a clergyman of the Church of England should be anxious to maintain?" "He (the author) has to defend his character from misrepresentations, which are, professionally, of a very unpleasant nature, amounting to insinuations of Popery against a Protestant clergyman." "I, a clergy-

* "The true sense of the Scripture," says Watson, the preacher of Queen Mary, "is only known by tradition and consent of the Catholic Church." [Then let all take heed of reading the word of God as they would avoid being seduced.] "Because the very Scripture indeed is not the bare letter, as it lieth to be taken of every man, but the true sense as it is delivered by the universal consent of Christ's church"—[Which words do effectually destroy the authority of the Scriptures and make them useless, since we cannot understand any thing in them, until we first know what sense the universal church of Christ puts upon them. And how shall we come to know that? How difficult to understand how the universal church interprets each place!]

The passages between brackets are Strype's.

man of the Church of England, am charged, &c. &c.;"

"And I have a sacred character to support; but, if I be represented as desirous of union with the Church of Rome in her unreformed state, as wishing to compromise truth, and as having misstated writers, in vain I shall hope to discharge those important duties of instruction which devolve on me, in virtue of the commission which I have received, to teach and to exhort in the Church of Christ." p. 14.

And may not those clergymen, who are represented by Mr. Wix as evangelical and schismatical, turn upon him with the same expostulation? *They*, too, have characters to support; and to many of them, from the extent of their dioceses (if the words be meant to include bishops) or the magnitude of their parishes, professional influence is of as much value as to himself; and a minister of the church would do well to consider this subject, before he brands a brother clergyman with the title of schismatic.

With regard to the whole question of the Bible Society, Mr. Wix appears to us to be under a complete delusion. The following extract from the Bishop of St. David's may perhaps, if candidly considered, remove some of his objections.—We are sorry that we have not much room for quotation, or we should avail ourselves of his lordship's observations to a greater extent: the pamphlet is, in all its parts, worthy of the high character of its respected and venerable author.

"Against the Bible Society Mr. Wix has united his forces with Mr. Phelan. To your lordship I am indebted for the first sight of Mr. Phelan's tract. And, though it is my misfortune to have different views of that Society from your lordship, yet I am persuaded, you will not be unwilling to see how far Mr. Phelan has made good his critique on my defence of the Bible Society.

"The Bible Society (says Mr. Phelan) professes itself to be a religious [and most apostolical] institution.' And why should it not profess itself to be a reli-

gious institution? The distribution of the Bible is, certainly, a religious, and, we may add, an apostolical act. For, next in usefulness to the preaching of the Gospel, is the distribution of the Gospel. But the Bible Society no where, I believe, calls itself a most apostolical Institution.

“ ‘The Bible Society asserts, that its officiating ministers are directed by the special influence of the Holy Spirit.’ Where does the Bible Society assert this? I believe, no where.

“ ‘The Bible Society indiscriminately admits heretics and schismatics of all existing denominations.’ Admits to what? To the distribution of the Bible; that is, it accepts the subscriptions of all who are willing to contribute their pecuniary aid to this charitable and evangelical duty. It thankfully receives all subscriptions from whatever quarter they come. But it leaves to every man his own faith and motives and principles. For it discusses no man’s motives, nor questions any man’s faith or principles; but is content with uniting all men in the furtherance of the Gospel, as far as it can, by its unofficial and unministerial exertions in disseminating the Gospel. It assumes no act of the Christian ministry, but, by the delivery of the Bible to the poor, it affords abundant supplies auxiliary to the Christian ministry.” pp. 32—34.

Our remarks have extended to a length which we did not anticipate; yet we cannot close the article without expressing our regret that Mr. Wix has not more explicitly informed us *in what way* the union between the two churches is to produce the desired results? By what process, for instance, is the influence of the Bible Society to be destroyed? Suppose the Church of England to have made the requisite concessions, and, by concessions on the other side, to be connected with the Church of Rome, what measures would this Catholic body be able to adopt for the extirpation of “this pestilence?” The mere act of union would, in this country, do nothing for that purpose: it might add 500,000 Roman Catholics to the nominal profession of the Church; but they could scarcely be more hostile to the Society than we find them already. Christ. Observ. No. 218.

ready; so that neither would the opponents of that institution be increased, nor its friends diminished. We have no reason to suppose that the arguments of its enemies would be then more conclusive, nor their misrepresentations more wonderful or more effective, than at present. There are, therefore, only two ways, as it occurs to us, by which the object could be attained; one by the natural progress of Roman Catholic principles, and the other by that *ultima ratio papæ*, the fiery argument of the reign of Queen Mary. In the latter case, the constitution of this free country must be materially changed; and we are quite certain that Mr. Wix did not look for the operation of either of these modes. Our impression is, that he had no very clear or definite view upon the subject: his idea seems to have been, that there are many religious divisions in the country, and that the union of Episcopalians would tend, in some sort, to heal them: but in what way the specific objects, which we have noticed, are to be attained, he has not, as we think, very closely considered. The true method of healing divisions is not by a coalition with the bishop of Rome, but by a Christian adherence to the principles of our National Church, and by the exercise of kindness and charity, of liberality and the amplest toleration, towards all men. It is too much to expect, however much it is to be desired, that in these days Christians shall universally adopt exactly the same modes of worship, or submit to the same kind of discipline: but, if they differ in the form, they may agree in the substance; and the very circumstance of their differing will, we trust, be at least rendered so far beneficial, as to provoke them mutually to love and to good works.

Original Dramas: containing Royal Beneficence, or the Emperor Alexander; Winter; Kendrew, or the R

Coal Mine; The Force of Conscience; Mrs. Jordan and the Methodist; and The Salutary Kefproof; with Prefaces and Notes. By JAMES PLUMPTRE, B. D. Vicar of Great Gransden. Hunts, and formerly of Clare-hall, Cambridge. Cambridge: 1818.

A Letter to the Author of a Tract, entitled The Stage, or Three Dialogues between Mr. Clement and Mr. Mortimer. Published by the Religious Tract Society. By the Same. Cambridge: 1819.

THE family of Mr. Plumptre is not unknown to the world in the department of fiction and elegant literature. Our author's sisters, Annabella and Anne, have distinguished themselves by a variety of publications—not much short, perhaps, of thirty—chiefly plays and novels, either original or translated from the German; to which may be added several translations of French and German travels, biographical sketches, &c.* Our author's pen has been still more prolific; and, in addition to a variety of sermons and collections of songs, he has devoted no less than five or six works to the object of purifying the stage. His published sermons are chiefly of a moral tendency; and several of them are devoted to topics which do not usually find admission into our pulpits, but which are doubtless of considerable interest to society; such as Vaccination, the popular Dread of Apparitions, &c. His three Discourses on Tithes are rather more naturalized; and the duties of men to the inferior animals have frequently constituted the subject of pulpit addresses. We shall not stop, on the present occasion, to consider how far subjects of this nature are adapted to the Christian temple: we should trust that the many hundred discourses which have been preached

* We are not aware whether Dr. Plumptre, the learned Dean of Gloucester, who is also an author and editor, is of the same family.

by our author in the course of years which have elapsed while these occasional sermons were successively appearing from the press, were of a more directly *spiritual* nature, and addressed themselves far more pointedly to the auditors as fallen beings, degraded by sin, guilty before God, needing a Saviour, and requiring to be frequently and minutely informed respecting the plan of redemption, its Author, its objects, its end; the way of becoming interested in it; the danger of neglecting it; the duties resulting from it; and a large variety of kindred and collateral topics. Trusting that points of this description have been the more regular objects of our author's ministry, we shall pass over these more exempt cases with one remark; that although the pulpit admits of a large range of topics, so that scarcely any thing that relates to the well-being, even the *physical* well-being, of mankind is wholly excluded, there are *very* few cases in which topics of this secondary nature ought to constitute the principal object of a discourse: though they may often, perhaps, be incidentally alluded to by way of inference or suggestion. The country clergyman does well to admonish his farmers to be kind to the inferior animals; but he must not forget that his discourse is to a being who is "of more value than many sparrows," and who, when he is learning that "God careth for oxen," may be slow to advert to the interests of his own soul—that soul for which Christ died, and which must survive for ever when all the inferior animals have passed into oblivion. We are not assuming—for we do not remember to have read our author's occasional sermons—that he has not made them a vehicle for subjects of much higher interest than those to which some of their titles directly relate; but we thought it right just to point out the danger of permitting what ought seldom to be more than a passing and incidental topic, to entrench

upon the *great* object of pulpit instruction, which is to turn the sinner from darkness unto light, and from the power of satan unto God, and to build up the true believer in his most holy faith.

Another of Mr. Plumptre's efforts was to improve the popular collections of songs; for which purpose he published his Letters to Dr. Aikin, on song-writing, and has issued several selections, formed upon his own principles, containing more than a thousand specimens. His collections have been stated, by his critics, to be entirely free, not only from all licentious compositions, but from all that are in any way offensive to morality or religion, or that are founded upon false principles. He is said to have excluded all allusions to heathen fables, all passionate and poetical adoration, all complaints of fate and fortune, all mention of ghosts and fairies, and in short, adds the British Critic, "every thing that will not bear the test of Christian principles." In addition to this, he has made great efforts to purify the hawkers' baskets of immoral songs, by substituting verses of a loyal and virtuous nature in the place of that exceptionable trash which too often furnishes their most marketable commodity.

As we are not much conversant with this species of literature, we can only say, that if the result has been as successful as we are persuaded the motive was good, Mr. Plumptre will have performed a considerable service to the song-reading part of the community. We know, however, that compilations thus duly chastised too often want what is the first thing which the admirers of songs look for—*attractiveness*; without which they cannot work their way into extensive popular circulation. If Mr. Plumptre has found or composed any thing like the above number of songs, possessing this quality and yet endued with the higher ones above-mentioned, he has certainly been singularly

successful. We had no conception that our language was half so rich in this species of composition.

But it is with our author's writings on the stage that we are at present concerned. In 1796, he published some observations on Hamlet, to prove that in that tragedy Shakespear intended to allude to the case of Mary Queen of Scots. He had, in the preceding year, published a tragedy of his own, entitled Osway. In 1810, appeared Four Discourses on the Stage, preached before the University of Cambridge. In 1812, he published "The English Drama Purified, being a specimen of plays in which all the passages which have appeared to the Editor objectionable, in point of morality, are omitted or altered." The same year produced an abridgment of the four discourses, as a sixpenny tract; since which, the two publications at the head of this review have been ushered into notice.

Mr. Plumptre may, therefore, be considered as a veteran in the cause of the theatre. He views dramatic exhibitions as furnishing an engine of great power, which ought not to be laid aside, but to be turned to a useful and profitable account, in increasing the good taste, good sense, and, still more, the morality and religion of the community. We are not precisely aware of the nature of all his arguments, not having his Four Discourses at hand; and indeed the time has gone by for reviewing them; but there are one or two points suggested by his "Original Dramas" which we think we may touch upon with advantage, without entering far into the general question of the stage—a question which has been so often and so ably discussed, that we are not likely to throw much new light upon it.

In commencing our remarks, we are particularly anxious to avoid subjecting ourselves to a charge somewhat similar to that which Mr. Wix

has urged, on another subject, against his right reverend critic; (see our preceding Review,) as if Mr. Plumptre were advocating the cause of the stage *as it at present exists*. The contrary is the case; neither Mr. Plumptre nor Mr. Wix pursue their argument under the supposition of things existing as they now are and have long been; but both think amendment practicable; and therefore lay down their conciliatory suggestions—the one in favour of a union with the Church of Rome, the other for a friendly acquaintance with the theatre—under the idea that the Church of Rome and the stage of Great Britain respectively may be so reformed as to become worthy of our favourable regards. Mr. Plumptre's description of the stage “as it is, not as it ought to be,” is scarcely less severe than that of his opponent “Mr. Clement;” as far as we can gather “Mr. Clement's” invectives in the pages of Mr. Plumptre's replicatory Letter, where alone we have seen them.

Now, it is something in the cause of truth and good neighbourhood to have to do with an opponent who candidly admits, nay, warmly contends, that the stage as it is, and as it has been for ages, is a pest and nuisance to society. We should act quite unfairly were we to charge Mr. Plumptre with advocating the cause of an immoral stage, when so large a part of his life and writings—more, our readers may think, than became his profession—have been devoted to reduce it to unexceptionable purity.

Our author's opponents, we conceive, may be reduced chiefly to the following classes. First, those who prefer the stage as it is, and who, if it were truly reformed, would cease to find it attractive. How large this class may be, we have not the means of ascertaining; but, that it is not small, may be inferred from the circumstance of the managers of our theatres finding it so often their in-

terest to purvey to the taste of this part of their supporters. The arguments of such, if arguments they have, may very fairly pass unheeded; and if Mr. Plumptre meet with no other opposers, in his efforts to purify the drama, we trust the suffrages of the moral part of the community would bear him through with a triumphant majority.

A second class would oppose our author's plan on the ground that the drama, in all its forms and under every modification, is sinful; and that for a Christian to attempt to purify it is like a legislature providing enactments to regulate smuggling, or a divine undertaking to reduce high-way robbery to the bounds of propriety and decorum. The argument of such persons is, that the very attempt to reform what is fundamentally wrong, gives an indirect sanction to the evil. *Delenda est Carthago* is their motto; the drama is “the devil's cobweb to catch flies,” and therefore, under no circumstances, ought to be tolerated, even in thought, by a Christian mind.

Now, though our general conclusions are not very different from those of such an objector, yet we are not accustomed to arrive at them by so sweeping a process. Many introductory points need to be proved, and not a few arguments require to be answered, before the fair and temperate reasoner arrives at so large a conclusion. “Is the drama lawful?” is one of those indefinite questions which cannot be answered without first settling a variety of prefatory ones. It is like being asked, on arriving from one's travels, “How do you like abroad?” or still more, like the vague subject of a prize essay at one of our universities, a few years since, “On general Knowledge.”

“Is the drama lawful?” may be best answered by another question; namely, What does the inquirer *mean* by the drama? “Are novels lawful?” is a similar question; to which we can only reply, that

"Cœlebs in search of a Wife," is lawful; and Tom Jones, though at length he found one, is not. "Talents Improved," and "The Two Wealthy Farmers," are allowed by the religious world to be lawful, though a variety of tales, not one degree more fictitious, are not. The question then is not whether fiction, *as fiction*, is unlawful, but whether a particular work (for books, like men, must be judged by their qualities, and not their names,) comes on the right or left side of the boundary of demarcation between good and evil. Another question is, Where does the boundary lie? It of course excludes the novels of Smollett and Sterne, of Fielding and Lewis. But are the Fashionable Tales of Miss Edgeworth, the Agrippina of Miss Hamilton, the Cecilia of Madame D'Arblay, or the Refusal of Mrs. West, to be ranked in the same class? Is the authoress of "Elizabeth, ou l'Exile de Siberie," to take her station with the author of *La Nouvelle Heloise*? And, in short, are all works of fiction to lie on the same shelf, and to undergo the same censure, without regard to their respective merits or demerits? We are not attempting, on the present occasion, to draw the line: we only mean to shew that it must be drawn somewhere; and if, as we believe would be the case, we should draw it far more strictly, than would suit the taste of ordinary readers, or even than would be thought necessary by many who call themselves very sincere Christians, our reason for doing so would not be that vague sort of argument which blends the good, the passable, and the positively bad together, but rather a conviction that the temptations are usually on the side of laxity, with a firm persuasion, grounded on a variety of considerations which we have not opportunity at present to detail, that comparatively few works of fiction are wholly unexceptionable in their nature; and that even where they

are so, they are not always wholesome in their tendency, since they accustom the mind to an artificial food, by no means calculated to increase its moral or intellectual vigour. There are many dishes which we would not absolutely prohibit at our table, but which we should not wish, either as economists or physicians, to see become a staple article of diet.

While then we differ widely from our author in many of his arguments and conclusions, we should hesitate to do so exactly on the ground of the objector, who assumes at once as an admitted postulate in the inquiry, that the drama is necessarily unlawful in all its forms and modifications. Dr. Watts remarks, "The affairs of this life, with a reference to a life to come, would shine bright in a *dramatic* description." Mrs. Hannah More's Sacred Dramas, we suppose, will be generally admitted to be not only unexceptionable, but highly useful. We believe, indeed, there are a few persons who object even to these; and we will undertake to answer their arguments, when they have first shewn us why they still continue to tolerate the Pilgrim's Progress, or Bunyan's Holy War; or how they reconcile Nathan's parable to David, or Jotham's apologue of the Trees choosing a King, with their ideas of scriptural truth.

We cannot then condemn the written drama as simply unlawful, without obliquely censuring every thing in the shape of fictitious dialogue, however excellent its object. Mr. Plumptre uses the word drama in a large sense: he says he should not object to his parishioners hearing recited the "Village Politics," the "Two Wealthy Farmers," or other Cheap Repository Tracts, which he considers to be, in fact, so many dramas. His own dramas are little more than benevolent dialogues, with scarcely any plot, and no passion. The usual objections, therefore, to dramas, *as such*, cannot ex-

tend to works like these; yet they are dramas; or, if they are not, what is the definition of a drama? We presume the circumstance of its being moral, or otherwise, does not alter its name, though it may go far to determine whether or not it is allowable.

But there is a third class of opponents, whom we think our author will find more difficulty in confuting. The objectors of this class, without contending for the abstract unlawfulness of the drama, see so many other considerations involved in the question, that, however lawful it may be in theory, they fear it can never long continue lawful in practice. The very first circumstance that occurs—namely, that a drama is not simply *to be read*, but *to be acted*—materially limits the field of inquiry. Allow the plot and dialogue to be as excellent as possible, the circumstances attending the representation are too suspicious to pass unnoticed by the Christian moralist. The “scenery, machinery, decorations, and dresses” quite alter the question. Our readers will readily fill up the outline; and whether a class of persons is to be maintained entirely for the purpose, or every man is to be his own actor, the evils incident to the practice must necessarily be very great. The theatre might indeed be purified, *in imagination* both of bad society and exceptionable sentiments: but when has it been so *in fact*, or when is it likely to become so? We shall not rake together the seculence of the stage, either ancient or modern, in proof of the justice of our censure: this has been done often enough, and perhaps too often for the interests of Christian decorum. It is unfair to bring forward, as an argument against Mr. Plumptre, what he himself censures as much as his opponents. But the point in which we chiefly differ from him, is this, that while he admits the

abuses, he thinks them susceptible of removal. In theory, they may be and are so; but, in reality, we fear they are not. Our author himself has published several popular dramas purified: but were they acted, or are they likely to be so? And if acted, are they preferred by the playing part of the population to the ordinary editions of the same drama? And if the play be pure, are there no injurious circumstances attending the representation which it is almost, if not quite, impossible to overcome?—But let us listen to our author, whose sentiments will appear from the first passage of his dedication to Mrs. Hannah More.

“The name of Mrs. Hannah More must henceforth rank high amongst those who have distinguished themselves in the literature of Great Britain; and, which is a rare instance, you have attained excellence in the theological and moral, and in the dramatic departments. We are indebted to the pen of Mrs. H. More for Practical Piety, and Christian Morals,—and also for the tragedies of Percy and Fatal Falshood, and for a volume of Sacred Dramas. Your dramatic career, however, exhibits this remarkable phenomenon, that, having written one of the most interesting and pathetic,—and, in many respects, most religious and moral—tragedies in the English language, and which is, in the theatrical phrase, a stock piece, you have, after a period of twenty-three years, re-published it, together with your other pieces, with a preface, in which you profess that you consider the stage as an amusement incompatible with the character of a sincere Christian. Your reasons for this opinion are stated, and many instances are pointed out, in which the false religion and false morals of the stage are exposed with but too much justice. You do not, as many other writers against the stage have done, censure it as altogether unlawful in itself; but on account of what it is in the present day: and you express your want of hope that it will ever be successfully and thoroughly reformed. You, at the same time, acknowledge the stage to be ‘of all public amusements’—‘the most interesting, the most intellectual, and the most accommodated to the taste and capacities of a rational being: nay, that it is almost the only one which

has mind for its object; which has the combined advantage of addressing itself to the imagination, the judgment, and the heart; that it is the only public diversion which calls out the higher energies of the understanding in the composition, and awakens the most lively and natural feelings of the heart in the representation.' (Works, Vol. III. Pref. p. 5) Under these impressions, it is the wish, I believe, of many friends to the cause of piety and virtue, that, with your altered views of the stage, instead of prohibiting it as an amusement to Christians, you had employed the great resources of your mind, (displayed in the works before mentioned, and in your other works, especially in that great treasure of piety, morals, delineation of character, and exquisite humour, the *Cheap Repository Tracts*;) in setting an example of dramas, which might be worthy the attention of the lover of the stage and the Christian. You, however, make an exception in favour of the reading of plays: 'I think then, that there is a substantial difference between seeing and reading a dramatic composition; and that the objections which lie so strongly against the one, are not, at least in the same degree, applicable to the other.' (p. 40.)

"I have myself, madam, as I have stated in a former work, been, at a very humble distance, a writer for the stage, and consider myself indebted to you for having opened my eyes to the unchristian spirit of it in its present state. But I have judged it right, with my altered sentiments, to do what lies in my power—however little that may be—to purify it from its corruption, and render it more worthy the attention of a Christian. With these views I published, a few years ago, a collection of some of our best dramatic compositions, with the exceptionable passages omitted or altered, and, in pursuance of the same system, I now lay before the public the following dramas, written at different times since; and I presume to inscribe them to you, in the hope that they may not be found in the perusal altogether unworthy your patronage. I have, in the preface to the *Force of Conscience*, p. 129, made mention of the manner in which I first became acquainted with your *Cheap Repository Tracts*; I must farther acknowledge, that it was the interest you had gained in my youthful mind, by your tragedy of *Percy*, which disposed me favourably towards your better productions, to your Remarks on the

Speech of M. Dupont, in the year 1793, your *Thoughts on the Manners of the Great, and Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World*, and the *Tracts themselves*; and I make no doubt, that, had you thought proper to have written plays conformable to your present impressions of Christianity, you might have begun a good work, which, though, perhaps, slow in its progress at first, might have spread, and increased, and strengthened, till it had effected the reformation which you consider as at once so desirable and so hopeless." pp. v.—viii.

It appears from this passage, that Mr. Plumptre was not, in the early part of his life, aware of the "unchristian spirit" of the stage in its present state. His first object, when he made the discovery, was to contrive means for its reformation; while Mrs. More, who had "opened his eyes," gave it up as a thing completely "hopeless." Mr. Plumptre seems to think, that she ought, at least, to have made the attempt.—Now we fully believe, with Mr. Plumptre, that had the thing been feasible, Mrs. More would have effected more than almost any other author. Dr. Johnson and Mr. Garrick, no mean authorities on such a question, are said to have spoken of her talents in dramatic writing in very sanguine terms; terms which the applause bestowed upon "*Percy*" prove to have been well merited. But surely this speaks strongly against our author's argument; for if Mrs. More, whose pen has never been backward to effect any desired reformation in the morals or habits of her countrymen, and who possessed such peculiar talents for this department of labour, gave up the point in despair, it certainly is no slight proof of the difficulty, if not impracticability, of effecting the wished-for amendment. We will not, indeed, say that a reformed stage—a stage reformed even to the

extent which our benevolent author desires—is a thing wholly impossible, but, we fear, in practice, the difficulties are next to insuperable. Christian virtue is, in fact, a very tame sort of thing to a lover of the drama: the bustle and passion which give zest to the theatre are not easily transferable to the milder atmosphere where the graces of Christianity love to dwell. We will not say that any one particular passion, even love itself, is absolutely necessary to fit a drama for popular acceptance: but *some* passion must be introduced; for a play without passion is too insipid to keep up the attention of ordinary minds. But when once passion is admitted, the tendency is rapidly downward. Passion is too dangerous a weapon to be sported with without risk. The poet has indeed his choice of passions, and, if he be well disposed, may make his scenes conspire to produce a moral impression. The undertaking is, however, very arduous, especially as almost all the passions which appear most striking in dramatic exhibitions, are those of the exceptionable kind. Meekness, gentleness, kindness, modesty, chastity, piety, and similar affections, would produce little stage effect. The cardinal virtues of the theatre are rage, jealousy, revenge, ambition, licentious passion, and others equally exceptionable. Our author has avoided the difficulty, by introducing no passion at all into his “original dramas.”—They are founded on some anecdote illustrative of kindness, generosity, or humanity, and they teem with good advice and pious sentiments.—But all this is not sufficient for the stage. Our author has exerted himself in vain to procure a trial for two of his pieces, at the London and one of the provincial theatres: they have been decidedly rejected; and the rejection, we might have conceived, would have taught him a lesson, which he does not seem to have learned, relative to the real nature of

the taste of the lovers of the drama.

It would, however, be incorrect to suppose that no other cause might be assigned for the rejection of Mr. Plumftre's dramas, except the moral and religious character which he has given to them. They are destitute of some of the chief requisites which even a reformed theatre would perhaps demand. If, instead of introducing passages of Scripture, and delivering solemn lectures on death, and judgment, and eternity, and recommending prayer and psalmody, and making their characters plain good old fashioned Christians, they had been constructed on the popular models, they would still, we apprehend, have been rejected. We mean no disrespect to our author, when we say that we do not consider theatrical writing his strongest point: his dramas are very good and sensible dialogues; and if divested of their references to the stage, and pruned in the manner we may hereafter suggest, we should think they might form a very interesting volume under the title of “Family Dialogues,” or “Benevolent Conversations.”—But for theatrical representation they are as unfit in other respects as in that which constitutes their great moral merit—their want of conformity with the taste of the existing drama.

We have waved to point whether genius of a very superior order, under the influence of Christian principles, might or might not be able to produce compositions of a highly moral and religious kind, which should rival in the public taste the present run of theatrical compositions. Even were this to be effected, the preference, after all, would not be given to the moral but to the intellectual qualifications of the writer: and it is not saying much for the stage, to suppose, that although it would make a sacrifice, the sacrifice was not to religion but to genius; and that had the genius been produced without the religion,

it would have been equally, or even more acceptable, while the religion, except under the protecting ægis of genius, would have been scouted as an unwelcome intruder. It goes far, in our opinion, to decide the point, that religious persons in general have thought it necessary rather to abandon the stage altogether than to attempt its purification. We should not have been so sanguine as our author, had Mrs. H. More undertaken the task; not from distrust in her powers, but from the very nature of the achievement. For, after all, the purity of the written drama is but one among many considerations; and we believe, that those who have been most "behind the curtain," will readily allow that a theatre, to be extensively attractive in any country, must admit much that Mr. Plumptre would think ought not in a *Christian* land to be introduced, and introduce much that ought in every land to be avoided.

Our author seems to think it a little peculiar, that Mrs. H. More, after writing for the stage, should now condemn it "as an amusement incompatible with the character of a sincere Christian." He, however, agrees with her in her opinion of "the false religion and false morals" of the stage; and seems pleased that she does not "condemn it as altogether unlawful in itself." But how *could* she have condemned it thus abstractedly? We have already quoted Dr. Watts's remark; to which might be added, the sentiments of many other wise and pious men, who have left upon record their opinion, that in a nation of true Christians, dramatic scenes *might* be contrived not only of an innocent but of a beneficial tendency. "How might such performances," adds Dr. Watts, "under a Divine blessing, call back the dying piety of the nation to life and beauty! This would make religion appear like itself, and confound the blasphemies of a profligate world, ig-

Christ. Observ. No. 218.

norant of pious pleasures." But while good men are writing thus in their closets, and speculating upon a state of things not likely soon to exist; those who, like Mrs. More, have had large experience in society, and have deeply fathomed the human heart, as exhibited in the tendency which the theatre has always been prone to take, have felt it necessary "to express their want of hope that it will *ever* be successfully and thoroughly reformed." We think Mrs. More has therefore acted wisely in not taking up the abstract point, that the stage is "altogether unlawful in itself." It is very certain it is unlawful as it existed in the days of our forefathers, as it exists in our own, and as it is likely to exist in those of our posterity. It is therefore a question of fact rather than of abstract discussion; though even on the general subject, there are not a few considerations which ought to have weight. It may be doubted whether the most reformed stage—a stage, for example, where nothing should be acted below the moral standard of Mrs. More's *Sacred Dramas*—would be altogether lawful. We are not completely certain that it would be quite lawful for a responsible being to spend his life in the exercise of spouting even good sentiments, as a mere actor; that he could dress and gesticulate as would be necessary to produce effect even on a reformed stage without impairing his moral and intellectual dignity; or that he could "do his duty" as a performer without the temptation of pride and vanity, and other stimulants which would injure him as a Christian. In the case of female performers, the argument is still more strong. Upon all grounds therefore, and especially when we consider that the disciple of the Redeemer is to avoid even *the appearance* of evil, we think that it is not to be hastily conceded that the stage, under any modification, can ever be wholly lawful. But it is not on these

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à priori considerations, that we rest our opposition. We will admit, as Mrs. More does, if the objector so wishes, that dramatic exhibitions are not abstractedly sinful; yet, if they are almost necessarily and unavoidably so in actual practice, the argument against them is not less strong.

With regard to *reading* plays, the question lies within very compendious bounds. If the individual sentiments and the general tendency be lawful, they are not rendered less so by being conveyed in the form of a dialogue, or by being worked up into a narrative, any more than unlawful sentiments would become lawful by being denominated a sermon or moral essay.

"That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet."

Such is the theory: but in practice it is almost invariably found that plays are built upon false principles; that they introduce exceptionable, or at best idle, scenes; that even where they boast of not doing any harm they do no good; that the development of passion constitutes their usual object; and that the very circumstance of their being plays presupposes, with a very few exceptions, that they are founded on the usual models of dramatic literature. These things premised, it is not necessary to assert that dramatic reading is abstractedly unlawful, in order to point out its actual tendency. The presumption is, in every case, against a new play: the odds against it are as many as the number of unchristian dramas bears to that of Christian ones. The question of play-acting and play-reading comes nearly to this alternative, that while the world is what it has ever been, plays, to answer their avowed purpose, will seldom be what a sincere Christian can approve; and that, when all the world are sincere Christians, plays will not be wanted at all. In the mean time, they must be, generally speaking, injurious; and as

to the attempt to reform them, we would say with a Roman play-wright on another occasion,

"Nihilo plus agas
Quam si des operam ut cum ratione
insanias."

A few words, more immediately relative to the work before us, will conclude our remarks.

The first of these dramas is intended to record the benevolence of the Emperor of Russia, in assisting to rescue a young man apparently drowned, and for which he received a medal from the Royal Humane Society in London. This drama minutely describes the methods for restoring suspended animation, and enters at length into the praise of vaccination and the Bible Society.—The second, entitled "*Winter*," seems intended to shew the best mode of guarding against the effects of excessive cold, and the usefulness of the clergy circulating information of this kind among their parishioners.—The third describes the case of a party engulfed in a coal-mine by a flood, with a variety of good advice suitable to such an occasion. Two of the characters are "*patient Joe*," and "*Mary the collier girl*," well known to the readers of the Cheap Repository Tracts, to which the author professes to have been greatly indebted in the composition of his dramas.—The fourth "*on the Power of Conscience*," gives an account of a person who had committed murder, which he concealed for many years, but was at last induced by the torments of remorse to confess, and for which he suffers capital punishment.—The fifth is founded on an alleged anecdote of the actress Mrs. Jordan and a Methodist Preacher, who, overcome at seeing her surrounded by a poor family whom she had relieved, was induced to seize her hand in the street, and to sing his palinode on his former invectives against players. The anecdote itself, as related with all its circumstances, is extremely

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improbable; and whether true or not, is a most unfortunate subject for a drama. We entirely object to the principle on which the whole piece is constructed, and which would encourage a spurious and theatrical candour very different from that Christian charity which, we are persuaded, it was the intention of the writer to inculcate.—The last drama is founded chiefly on one of "Buck's Anecdotes," in which a clergyman reproves a butcher for swearing; and, happening to meet with him some years after, finds that the reproof was of service in inducing him to think seriously upon the subject of religion. The effect, though not the intention of this drama, is to blend too much the different orders of society. The last scene in particular, which is meant to be affecting, is rendered quite ludicrous by this circumstance. We will give the closing speech with the author's directions to the actor.

"*Lord O.* Such a circle, Sir William, should not separate without joining hands in friendship. And, yet, how shall we arrange it! *Mr. Shepherd* (the clergyman,) *Mr. Goodman* (the butcher)—[*Lord O. and Sir William alternately shake hands with Mr. S. (the clergyman,) and Goodman (the butcher)*—*Mr. S. and Goodman then take each other cordially by the hand, in the centre, while Lord O. takes Goodman's hand and Mrs. G's (the butcher's wife)*—*Sir William takes Mr S.'s and Ruth (the butcher's daughter)'s*—*Mrs. G takes Muggins (the publican)'s, and Muggins takes George's*—*Ruth takes Crusty's, and Crusty his wife's.*] *The curtain drops.*" pp. 239, 240.

As the author's intention is so excellent, we have abstained from criticising at length the merits of his work, which is wholly unfit for its avowed object of theatrical representation, but might be made an amusing book for young persons, by such omissions and alterations as those we have suggested. The fifth drama should be wholly expunged. After all, however, we fear there is an incurable incongruity in the very basis of the work. We can hardly reconcile to our minds the idea of family-

prayer and psalm-singing being acted. But it is time to let our readers hear Mr. Plumptre speak. He will perhaps thank us for selecting the following scene.

"*Goodm.* Sir, I cannot help thinking that I have seen your face, and heard your voice before?

"*Mr. S.* Possibly in my own church.—Were you ever at Gladford?

"*Goodm.* No, sir. Were you ever at Blessbury?

"*Mr. S.* [*Recollecting*] Yes—about five and twenty years since, when I was going to look at the village of Gladford, where I now reside as curate.

"*Goodm.* I cannot, surely, mistake, sir. Did you put up at the Wheat-sheaf?

"*Mr. S.* I think that was the inn.

"*Goodm.* Do you remember, sir, that, under the window of the room in which you sate, was the stall of a butcher, who most profanely curst and swore? You opened the window, reproved him, and shut it again. The butcher, however, continued his oaths, and you again opened the window, that you might the more readily continue your reproofs.

"*Mr. S.* [*Putting aside the Ease-and-Comfort, and sitting upright.*] I remember well, now you remind me of it. At first he received my reproofs with all imaginable contempt. At length, however, I observed, that the butcher, whenever he dropped an oath, looked up to see whether I noticed it. This encouraged me to persist, and I set before him, in few words, some of the most important and awful truths of religion.

"*Goodm.* You did, sir. I am that man. There was, at the same time, an authority and a kindness in your manner, an affection for the sinner, while you hated the sin, that had a powerful effect upon me. From that moment, I was led into serious reflection upon my ways. The following Sunday I went to church, which I had seldom frequented before; and, when I did, it was without any thoughts of God. There I heard a sermon which searched me to the bottom, shewed me to myself, and a change took place in my heart. It is to you, then, sir, that I owe all that I am in this life, and all my hope in that which is to come.

"*Mr. S.* [*Rising from his chair.*] Gra-

cious God! I 'cast my bread upon the waters,' and, thus, I 'find it after many days.' I must take thee to my bosom.

"Goodm. I am not worthy, sir.

"Mr. S. Nor I. We are brethren.

"Goodm. Rather you, sir, my father.

"Mr. S. My son. [They embrace.]

"Mrs. Goodm. Allow me to kiss your hand, sir. [Kneeling.]

"Mr. S. Rise.

"Mrs. G. Are you, indeed, the good gentleman, who was, under Providence, the instrument of my husband's conversion!

"Mr. S. Let us be seated again. [They sit.] Tell me now the whole of your story?" pp. 216—218.

The construction put upon Eccles. xi. 1, in this extract, though the usual one, appears less satisfactory than either of the following. "Bread" lite-

rally cast upon the waters was far more likely to be destroyed than recovered after many days; but if for "bread" we read "corn," and by "waters" consider to be meant "moist places"—caused, for instance, by an inundation, as in Egypt and some other hot climates—the meaning of the passage becomes very clear. Or, if instead of "upon the waters," we read "before the rainy season," the probability of finding it "after many days" is very great; and indeed no other time is fit for sowing corn in a tropical climate. We leave to our Hebraical readers to decide for themselves, how far either of these interpretations is admissible, as we have already exceeded the limits to which we had intended to confine the present article.

LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE, *&c. &c.*

GREAT BRITAIN.

PREPARING for publication:—Memoirs of Bishop Walton and his Coadjutors in the Polyglot Bible, by the Rev. H. J. Todd;—A Tale of Paraguay, by R. Southey, Esq.;—History and Statistics of Wallachia and Moldavia, by William Wilkinson, Esq.;—Memoirs of Camoens, by John Adamson;—The Introduction of Christianity into this Island; and the Welch Nonconformist's Memorial; by the Rev. Dr. W. Richards.

In the press:—Tour to the Himala Mountains, by J. B. Fraser;—Public Men of all Countries, in 1820;—Memoirs of R. L. Edgeworth, by himself and Daughter;—Sacred Lyrics, by James Edmestone;—Sunday School Sketches;—The Voice of Royal Bereavements, by Jos. Hughes, A.M.

Cambridge.—The Rev John Hulse, among his other bequests for the promotion of religion and learning, instituted a Lectureship in Divinity, to which he annexed a considerable salary, arising out of estates in Middlewich, Sandbach, and Clive. The duty of the lecturer is to preach and publish twenty sermons, chiefly on the truth and excellence of Revelation. The Rev. Christopher Benson, of Trinity College, has been

chosen Lecturer for the present year. This is the first appointment under Mr. Hulse's will.

Porson Prize.—The passage fixed upon for the present year is, Shakespeare, Macbeth, Act I. Scene the last. The Dialogue between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth—

Beginning with,

"We will proceed no further."

And ending with

—"What the false heart doth know."

The Hulsean Prize, for the present year, is adjudged to the Rev. E. White, B. A. of Corpus Christi College, for his essay on "The fitness of the time when Christ came into the world."

The subject of the Chancellor's third gold medal, for this year, is "Waterloo." That of the Hulsean Prize Dissertation is, "The Importance of Natural Religion."

There being two of Sir Wm. Browne's medals which have not been disposed of in former years, it is the intention of the Vice-Chancellor to give one medal for the best Latin Ode in imitation of Horace, and one medal for the best Greek

and Latin Epigrams, after the manner of the Anthologia, and after the model of Martial, respectively.

Subject for the Latin Ode :

Χρυσά φερμυξ.

For the Greek Epigram :

Εἰς Ἀγαλμα
τῆς μακαριστοῦ Καρολεττας,
Γεωργίου τοῦ τῶν Βρεταννίων Ἀρχόντος
Θυγατέρος.

For the Latin Epigram :

"Optimos nos esse dum infirmi sumus."

On the 3d of December, a deputation of the Court of Directors of the East India Company proceeded to the College, at Haileybury, to receive the report of the result of the general examination of the students at the close of the term. The students read and translated in the Sanscrit, Arabic, Persian, and Hindustani languages; and Specimens of Persian and Deva Nagaree writings were exhibited. Prizes were delivered to Messrs. Mangles, Blane, Bradford, Goldingham, Bacon, Gordon, Begbie, Arbuthnot, Venn, Udney, Hamilton, Schalch, Dorin, Paternoster, Smith, Lushington, Brown, Prinsep, Palmer, Babbington, and Franco.

An ingenious proposal has been made for illuminating coal-mines, by means of electricity, in glass tubes, so as to supersede the necessity of either steel-mills or safety lamps.

The *Annales de Chimie*, for last October, contains a paper announcing some alleged

results from the action of sulphuric acid on vegetable fibre. The first product is a sort of gum; from which, by means of diluted sulphuric acid, is produced *sugar*, which, when purified, is stated to be equal, in all respects, to that from the sugar-cane.—Hemp cloth was chiefly employed for the experiment, and the writer adds, that a pound of linen cloth will produce more than a pound of sugar.

Russia.—The Imperial Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg has been enriched with nearly five hundred valuable Persian, Arabic, and Turkish manuscripts, collected by M. Rousseau, formerly French Consul-General at Bagdat. They were taken to France, where they were purchased for Russia, before any competition arose from any other country.

Austria.—Savings banks, the advantages of which are so well known among us and our neighbours, the French, have made their way to Austria also; and one is now formed in the Leopoldstadt, one of the most populous suburbs of Vienna, under the auspices of the minister of the interior, Count de Saurau. The Austrian government renounces all influence over this nascent undertaking; but has given its sanction by an imperial edict.

Egypt.—The present enterprising Basha is said to have succeeded in forming a mercantile communication between India and his country, by way of the Red Sea; namely, from Bengal to Suez, thence across the desert to Cairo and Alexandria. He hopes, it is added, to restore the ancient Canal of the Ptolemies, so as to possess a navigable communication between the Arabian Gulph and the Mediterranean.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THEOLOGY.

A Mother's Journal during her Daughter's last Illness, with a Preface; by Miss Jane Taylor. 12mo. 3s. 6d.

Sermons on the unerring Doctrine of the Established Church; by the Hon. and Rev. E. J. Turnour. 3 vols. 8vo. 17. 7s.

The Divine Origin and Authority of the Christian Religion Vindicated; by the Rev. H. C. O'Donnoghue. 5s. 6d.

An Inquiry on the Duty of Christians with respect to War; by Mr. John Sheppard. 8vo.

Discourses and Essays on Subjects of Public Interest; by J. M'Gill. 12mo. 6s.

A Compendious History of the Church of God; by the Rev. C. Ives. 12mo. 2s. 6d.

The Chronology of Our Saviour's Birth; by the Rev. C. Benson. 8vo. 6s.

Four Letters to the Rev. W. J. Fox; by an Inquirer. 1s. 6d.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Germany and the Revolution; by Professor Goerres. 10s. 6d.

The Cathedral Antiquities of England; by John Britton. 12s. and 17. 4to.

Bibliotheca Britannica, or a General Index to the Literature of Great Britain and Ireland, ancient and modern; by R. Watt. Parts I. and II. 17. 1s. each.

W. Baynes and Son's Catalogue of Old Books for 1820. Part I.

Memoirs of Mrs. Hulston, Sister of Mrs. Savage. 12mo. 1s. 6d.

The Life of Andrew Melville, with an Appendix, consisting of original papers; by T. M'Crie. 2 vols. 8vo. 1l. 4s.

The Annual Biography and Obituary, for 1820. 15s.

Anecdotes of Books and Men; by the Rev. James Spence. cr. 8vo. 8s. 6d.

The Percy Anecdotes, by R. Percy.—Parts I. to IV. 18mo. 2s. 6d. each.

The Art of instructing the Infant Deaf and Dumb, by J. P. Arrowsmith; illustrated with plates, drawn and engraved by the author's Brother, an artist born deaf and dumb. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

Report upon the Establishment of M. de Fellenberg; by J. Attersoll. 3s. 6.

The Jacobite Relics of Scotland; col-

lected and illustrated by J. Hogg. 8vo. 12s.

Report of the Royal Jennerian Society. 1s.

Memoirs of the Protector Oliver Cromwell, and his Sons Richard and Henry, by Oliver Cromwell. 4to. with six portraits, 3l. 3s.

A Chronological Chart, shewing the contemporary Sovereigns of Europe, from the Norman Conquest to the present Time. Atlas drawing-paper, 5s. plain, and 7s. coloured.

A Compendious History of the Jews; by J. Bigland. 2s. 6d.

History of the County of York; by T. D. Whitaker. Parts I. and II. 2l. 2s. each.

Ogle, Duncan, and Co.'s Catalogue of the Writings of the Jansenists, and others connected with Port Royal, recently imported.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE SOUTH SEAS.

THE progress of the Gospel in Otaheite and the neighbouring islands continues to be very encouraging. The following are extracts from a recent letter of Pomare, King of Otaheite, to a gentleman connected with the London Missionary Society.

"Tahiti, Oct 3, 1818.

"Dear Friend,—May you be blessed and your family, with the salvation of Jehovah the true God."

"A missionary society has been formed here in Tahiti. We are collecting cocoa-nut oil, pork, arrow-root, and cotton, as property to promote the word of God.—Our business is to send the property collected to you, at your place. That is our work at this time. The chiefs of Tahiti have been made governors. We have also a secretary and a treasurer. When it gets into the same order as yours, then it will do.

"Next May we intend to establish a code of laws. Then all the people of Tahiti will assemble at Pare. The laws will be established; and a consultation will take place. The faulty parts will be corrected: and when it is very correct, the people will return to their houses."

"I have sent you the evil spirits (idols,) which you sent to me for. All the large idols are consumed, having been burnt in the fire. This is only a little one that re-

mains. The name of the little idol is Taroa."

"What am I to do with the little pearl box, which was inclosed in the parcel which you sent me? Had it been directed to me it would have been right; but there is another name on it, that of the Queen of Latakoo: that is the reason I inform you of it. I have sent back the little pearl box to Mr. Marsden, at Port Jackson, that he may return it to you. If you write to me again I shall be glad. If it be agreeable, send me three books: one very large Bible: one good portable one, very small; and one book of geography. If it be not agreeable, very well: do not think evil of me, dear friend, for the small request that I make in the conclusion of my letter.—We are well; and I shall be glad to hear that you are well also.

"May you be blessed by Jesus Christ, the true King of Salvation, by whom we must all be saved. POMARE."

The Missionaries write:—"The impression of St Luke's Gospel, in the Tabeitean language, is now completed, viz. 3000 copies; and although we demand, as formerly mentioned, a quantity of cocoa-nut oil, as the price of each copy, to help in defraying the expense of printing more, yet the people manifest the utmost eagerness to obtain them. It is matter of much concern to us, that great numbers must go without any for the present. Many of the

inhabitants of the Palliser's and other islands, to the eastward of Orabeine, have also demolished their idols, and become professed worshippers of the true God; and 320 of them have lately come to these islands in order to obtain books—Some elementary ones have been given to them, but it grieves us that we cannot let them have more."

"We wish to carry on the printing with spirit. An edition of 10,000 copies of Luke, as many of Matthew, and of the Acts (which are in a course of preparation, and will be ready by the time we obtain paper.) will not be too many for the urgent calls of the natives."

MORAVIAN MISSIONS.

A letter from one of the Moravian Missionaries at the Cape of Good Hope, (the Rev. H. P. Hallbeck,) announces the return of the brethren to the Witte Revier. The following is the substance of the communication.

"I found myself in the midst of our brethren and sisters at Uitenhagen on the 3d. (Oct.) Thanks to the Lord, and the many friends he had awakened in this place, among whom the noble landdrost and his amiable lady rank first, I found the missionaries and their small congregation much more comfortably situated than I could have expected. It is neither my intention, nor indeed in my power, to enumerate the really astonishing proofs of kindness which our brethren and Hottentots have received, and still continue to receive, from Colonel Cuyler and his lady. If I say that they have been, and are, like parents to the fugitives, it is saying much too little; for there are thousands of parents who do not study the interests of their children with as much zeal as did that noble family the interests of the missionaries and their flock."

"I was also extremely glad to find, that the Brethren Hoffman, Hornig, and Schulz, by their exemplary, and in this country unexampled, diligence, have procured for themselves, and for the brethren in general, the esteem of all classes; and that so the Hottentots were every where praised as faithful and diligent labourers: so much so, that the inhabitants of Uitenhagen greatly regretted their removal. As their return to the Witte Revier, several of the Hottentots, and indeed also the sinners the brethren had, on my first arrival, no great inclination to make the attempt.—It soon appeared that such an attempt

must be made, since, after having received a remuneration for our lost cattle, out of the herds re-taken from the Caffrees, we could no longer remain at Uitenhagen, where there was not sufficient pasture; and since, after the conclusion of a peace with the Caffres,* several of the farmers had returned to their farms, there was no pretext or reason why we should be afraid of returning to the Witte Revier. After I had spoken privately and publicly with the brethren and Hottentots, I had also the satisfaction to find, that their objections gradually vanished, and their courage and confidence in the Lord increased. Yet, in order to act as prudently as possible, we resolved first to make a reconnoitering visit to the Witte Revier and its neighbourhood, and the landdrost kindly offered to accompany us. Accordingly, the landdrost, with his son and clerk, Brother Schmitt, myself, and the Brethren Hoffman and Schulz, accompanied by about forty burghers and Hottentots, mostly armed, visited the Witte Revier, and scoured part of the Zuurberg on the 14th, 15th, and 16th of October. Having satisfied ourselves, as far as human foresight goes, as to the safety of returning, we resolved upon it without loss of time; leaving, however, in the first instance, most of the women and children here at Uitenhagen. The governor and Colonel Bird, who happened to be here about the time, very kindly ordered nine Hottentots, not belonging to the Witte Revier congregation, to assist us in erecting palisades, &c. and gave orders, that if we wanted provisions and other articles from Cape Town, such should be brought to Algoa Bay in the government schooner."

On the 23d of October, Mr. Hallbeck made the plan known to the Hottentots, and to his great astonishment, there was not one who wished to remain behind. On the 25th, they left Uitenhagen. The company consisted of Brother Schmitt and his wife, Mr. Hallbeck, the Brethren Hoffman and Schulz, thirty-four Hottentot men and women, and a few children.

He adds: "On the 26th, we arrived on the Witte Revier, encamped near the large pond, opposite to your yellow wood tree, and immediately set to work, after having in prayer on our knees implored the Lord's

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"* By another letter, it appears that this took place in October, and that in future the Kieskamma, or Cat Revier, four or five days' journey to the eastward, is to be the boundary of the colony."

blessing and protection. Eight happy days I spent at that place, which is now in its fullest beauty, having abundance of pasture and water; and worked at the side of the Hottentots, with my spade and hatchet, as much as my strength permitted; making excursions in the neighbouring mountains, in the cool hours of the day, on horseback or on foot, as opportunity offered. No where did we perceive any trace of the Caffres; and before I left our people, all fears and apprehensions of the most intimidated minds were removed. A most delightful spirit of willingness and confidence in the Lord was perceptible in the whole company; and I have no doubt but the glory of the second house will exceed that of the first, if this spirit continues."

The Witte Revier is a most delightful spot; and what is of more importance, the small congregation is in a very pleasing state. One hundred and fifty-five Hottentots are now under the care of the brethren there, of whom nineteen are communicants. Since the beginning of this year, eleven adults have been baptized, two persons received into the congregation, and four admitted to the holy communion.

The mission stands in great need of pecuniary assistance. The restoration of the settlement on the Witte Revier will require a much greater effort and expenditure than even its first establishment. All the buildings are burnt. Some old farm houses had been patched up, so as to afford shelter to the missionaries, without putting the brethren to much expense, being done with their own hands. They were gradually preparing timber and other materials for erecting a mission house, church, and other needful buildings, which, in course of time, would have been put up, one after the other, without much extraordinary expenditure; but now, their labour and preparations being destroyed, they have only a temporary shed to live in, and must therefore at once build proper habitations for themselves, and a church for their congregation. This urgent claim on the liberality of Christians will surely not pass unheeded.

We refer such of our readers as may wish to be informed, through what channel they can aid the re-establishment of this settlement, to the advertisement on the cover of our present Number. We are very

sorry to find, from a Report just published by the London Association in aid of the Moravian Missions, that the utmost possible efforts will be necessary to keep them from sinking. Out of an annual expenditure of 7,800*l.* they can only raise among themselves about 1240*l.*; and after all the extraordinary assistance afforded to them in 1818, there remained a deficiency of 1300*l.* at the end of the year. The falling in of some annuities has since provided for a part of this deficiency, but above 800*l.* still remains unliquidated. We feel assured that this statement will induce their fellow-Christians to exert themselves diligently, to rescue their establishments from ruin.

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN FRANCE.

In our last Number we gave some interesting notices, relative to the progress of the new system of education in France, chiefly under the patronage of the Society for Elementary Instruction.

The following is an extract from their last Report—the Duke de la Rochefaucauld in the chair—at a General Meeting held at Paris, April 29, 1819.

"To teach reading and writing is to give instruction; but education ought to go further: it ought to provide for its proper use; that is, *its moral and essential design.*

"Already we have provided for our schools suitable lessons, and religious books for the higher classes which are printed. But it is necessary that children, on leaving school, should be provided with reading, adapted to their age, which will occupy their leisure hours, gratify their desire for instruction, and, at the same time, supply the means of solid information, suited to their station, and calculated to inspire them with virtuous sentiments.—France, less happy in this respect than her neighbours, is almost destitute of this kind of reading. The English societies have composed and printed for this purpose a great number of books. The Dutch Society, for public utility, have for the same end provided a complete library, which they have presented to us. This has excited an earnest solicitude in our commission of public instruction, to follow the same example. If a good choice of books are in consequence provided in every school, the

benefit may be participated, not merely by the children of the schools, but also the youth, the more advanced, and even whole families. Each school should possess a sort of moral magazine, adapted to all ages and conditions.

"At Melun the plan of mutual instruction has been introduced in the *dépôt de Mendicité*. And it has also been introduced into several of the prisons, with the most encouraging prospects."

Extracts from the *Journal d'Education*.—

"The good effects of instruction are already apparent among the criminals in the prison at Montaigne. A school has been organized and conducted by M. Appert-Boucher, in this establishment, the result of which affords a very encouraging prospect: order, discipline, and moral improvement, are conspicuously evinced. In fact, the appearance of the prison is entirely changed: indecent games and scandalous conversation no longer exist: all is order, employment, and submission: one might almost persuade one's self to forget that these men have been capable of depriving themselves of liberty; what then may we not hope from continued success? It is therefore possible to introduce moral instruction into the abodes of criminals. Is there an object more benevolent than that of restoring to society, those criminals whom vice had separated from it?"

"An interesting ceremony took place at Groslay, near Montmorency, on the 21st of June. Madame ———, foundress of the school, established in that commune, being desirous of giving a little entertainment to the children of that institution, at the time of the annual distribution of the prizes, the curé of Groslay, the mayor, and the members of the municipal council, and of the cantonal committee, with many distinguished persons from Paris and the neighbourhood, and a great number of the inhabitants of the country, assisted at the solemnity. After a discourse addressed to the children and the company, by M. Comartin, mayor of Groslay, the children were examined in the different branches of their learning, and prizes were distributed to twenty of the most meritorious. The school-box was opened, and the contents divided among all the children. There was distributed to each child a printed sheet, containing the Sermon on the Mount, by our Lord Jesus Christ, extracted from the Gospel, and printed separately."

Christ. Observ. No. 218.

Adult schools have been formed not only among the military, where they are universal, but in several great towns; in one of which are 288 grown persons learning to read and write with great success.

M. de Roznovano, first Agha of Jassy, in Moldavia, visited the schools at Paris in the course of last winter, and has since established one in his own capital: he has been assisted by M. Cleobule, of Philippopolis, in Greece, who studied the system at Paris, and has translated the lessons into the Moldavian and Modern Greek.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SCRIPTURES AMONG ROMAN CATHOLICS.

We have repeatedly expressed our inability to keep pace with the progress of the Bible Societies in Great Britain and abroad. The more general results are all that we profess to detail, with such occasional facts as may serve to indicate the spirit and progress of the institution. The distribution of the Scriptures among Roman Catholics is one of those features of these Societies which we contemplate with the greatest pleasure.

The following is among the recent intelligence on this subject. Professor Van Ess writes from Marburg, July 13, 1819—

"It still pleases the Lord of Glory and the Lord of the Harvest to lay upon me his easy yoke, that I may draw the triumphal car of his everlasting Gospel. I bless His Name, that he still deigns to employ me as a labourer in His vineyard; to *behold His glory, full of grace and truth*; and to unite in the grand chorus of thanksgiving and praise, for the increased effusions of Divine Light, and for the more visible manifestation of His kingdom.

"The number of Testaments distributed from June 1818, to July 1819, exceeds 70,000; and the number which may yet be distributed is incalculable. *The Word which became flesh*, to redeem the sinful race of Adam, has, by the powerful influence of His grace, widely opened the gates of his approaching kingdom. He has prepared the path, and made straight a highway for the progress of the Word of His Cross."

Extracts from various Letters to the Professor, from his Catholic Brethren, breathe the same spirit.

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A Catholic Priest writes ;—"Through your kindness, I am at length favoured with 200 New Testaments, which have arrived in good condition ; and it will give you pleasure, in return, to hear, that the copies of the duodecimo edition are introduced into my school, and those of the octavo into many private houses. Before three weeks have elapsed, I calculate that every house in my parish will possess a New Testament. Many hearts have already been gladdened by the possession of that Book of Life so long withheld from them ; and the consequences which will result from it cannot fail to be most happy."

Another Catholic Priest writes ;—"You have afforded the highest gratification, both to my congregation and to myself, by kindly sending us fifty-five New Testaments in small print, and twenty-six on large types ; and my brother clergymen join with me in grateful acknowledgments, for the ninety copies in small print before delivered to them. I was particularly moved by the entreaties of several poor persons in the neighbourhood ; who immediately called upon me, as soon as they heard that this Heavenly Book was to be had.

"Visiting an old man, of eighty years, in his hut, I gave him a copy of the large print. He immediately opened it ; and, happening to turn to the fifth chapter of St. Matthew, he read it throughout with spectacles ; and then, falling on his knees, fervently praised God for the inestimable gift. 'I will not pass a day,' said the old man, 'without reading in this Book.'

An active distributor of the Catholic Scriptures reports—"The demand for the New Testament is so great, that I can scarcely procure a sufficient number of copies. Blessed be God, who excites, preserves, and augments this hunger, in spite of all obstructions of the enemies of the Divine Word ! but, blessed be likewise his Holy Name, that he always procures open hands ready to communicate, and cheerfully to deposit their gifts on the altar of the Lord, that the thousands of hungry souls in all the quarters of the globe may be satisfied !"

Another correspondent bears a similar testimony—"A short time ago, I was in a village inhabited partly by Protestants, and partly by Catholics ; and, at the house of a sick person, I became acquainted with a little company of Catholic Christians, who were united by a concern for the salvation of their souls, and met to-

gether on certain days for mutual edification. On my inquiring whether they were possessed of a Bible, they told me that they had been collecting money at every meeting, in order to buy one. This reply gave me occasion to acquaint them with the kind offer which you made me. This communication I doubted not would give them pleasure, but my expectations were far exceeded by the reality. They earnestly besought me to assist them in obtaining the Scriptures, and offered me the sum which had been collected.

"On my departure, more than ten Catholics, besides several Protestants, accompanied me to my travelling-chaise, repeating their request. To-day I received a pressing letter, filled with the most earnest entreaty, to send them the Word of God quickly."

CIRCULAR FROM ROME TO THE IRISH ROMAN CATHOLIC PRELATES.

We insert the following circular, issued under papal authority, to the Roman Catholic Bishops of Ireland, chiefly to shew the great importance of the measures now pursued in that country for the diffusion of education and true religion, as evidenced in the alarm which they have excited in the college of the Vatican. The recommendation in the circular to establish schools for the poor and illiterate, will, we trust, eventually defeat its own object ; for the superstitions of Popery have always declined in proportion as the lower classes of society have enjoyed the benefits of education. The proposed schools will not, we fear, admit the Scriptures within their walls ; but the very circumstance of their establishment in the bosom of a church whose motto has long been, that "Ignorance is the mother of Devotion," is of importance as a remarkable feature of the times, and as indicative of the course of policy which the Romish Church begins to find it necessary to pursue.

"Rome, Court of the sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Sept. 18, 1819.

"My Lord—The prediction of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Parable of the Sower, that 'sowed good seed in his field ; but, while people slept, his enemy came, and sowed tares upon the wheat,' Matt. xvi. 24, is, to the very great injury indeed of the Catholic Faith, seen verified in these our own days, particularly in Ireland. For information has reached the ears of the Sa-

cred Congregation, that Bible Schools, supported by the funds of the Catholics, have been established in almost every part of Ireland, in which, under the pretence of charity, the inexperienced of both sexes, but particularly peasants and paupers, are allured by the blandishments, and even gifts of the masters, and infected with the fatal poison of depraved doctrines. It is further stated, that the directors of these schools are, generally speaking, Methodists, who introduce Bibles, translated into English by 'the Bible Society,' and abounding in errors; with the sole view of seducing the youth, and entirely eradicating from their minds the truths of the orthodox faith.

"Under these circumstances, your lordship already perceives with what solicitude and attention pastors are bound to watch and carefully protect their flock from the 'snares of wolves, who come in the clothing of sheep.' If the pastors sleep, the enemy will quickly creep in by stealth, and sow the tares: soon will the tares be seen growing among the wheat, and choke it.

"Every possible exertion must, therefore, be made to keep the youth away from these destructive schools; to warn parents against suffering their children, on any account whatever, to be led into error. But, for the purpose of escaping the 'snares' of the adversaries, no plan seems more appropriate than that of establishing schools, wherein salutary instructions may be imparted to paupers and illiterate country persons.

"In the name, then, of the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, we exhort and beseech your lordship to guard your flock with diligence and all due discretion from those who are in the habit of thrusting themselves insidiously into the fold of Christ, in order thereby to lead the unwary sheep astray: and mindful of the forewarning of Peter the Apostle, given in these words, namely—'There shall be also lying masters among you, who shall bring in sects of perdition,' (2 Pet. ii. 1.) do you labour with all your might, to keep the orthodox youth from being corrupted by them—an object which will, I hope, be easily effected by the establishing of Catholic schools throughout your diocese. And, confidently trusting, that in a matter of such vast importance, your lordship will, with unbounded zeal, endeavour to prevent the wheat from being choked by the tares, I pray the all-good and omnipotent God to guard and preserve you safe many years.—Your lordship's most obedient humble servant,

"F. CARDINAL FONTANA, Prefect.
C. M. PEDICINI, Secretary."

SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF VICE.

The Committee state, that within the last four years they have been compelled, in order to preserve the public morals from contamination, to institute no less than eighty-five prosecutions against offenders of various descriptions, all of which have led to conviction, or to recognisances by the respective parties, that must prevent the repetition of similar crimes. They have checked the sale of toys and snuff-boxes, with abominable devices, which were imported in immense quantities from France and other countries. They have caused the whole stock in trade of some of the most shameless and abandoned traffickers in obscene books and prints, amounting to some thousands, to be seized, and have also destroyed no less than fifty expensive copper-plates, from which impressions of the latter were from time to time supplied: and, lastly, they have brought to condign punishment that most audacious offender, Carlile; who, notwithstanding repeated indictments found against him, still persisted in selling works of the foulest sedition, and the most horrible blasphemy, that ever disgraced a free press, or outraged the principles and feelings of the British public.

The necessary expenses attendant on these measures have greatly exhausted the funds of the Society; but the Committee appeal, with confidence of success, to every man for assistance and support, who acknowledges the blessings of our holy religion, and who, as a Christian, a patriot, or a father, wishes to preserve the morals of "the sons and daughters of our envied isle" from that secret corruption, which poisons the purest sources of domestic happiness, and which the laws, in their ordinary administration, cannot reach.

Our readers are already aware that subscriptions and donations are received by the treasurer, Henry Hoare, Esq., 37, Fleet-street; and by the secretary, Mr. George Prichard, 31, Essex-street, Strand.

SOCIETY FOR THE RELIEF OF POOR PIOUS CLERGYMEN.

The following are a few extracts from the letters received by the Society in the course of the last year. They afford ample proof of the necessity and utility of the institution.

1. "I am curate of ———, containing about two thousand persons, and about eight hundred attend Divine service; many

of whom seem to be established in grace and sound doctrine . . . My salary is no more than fifty-two pounds per annum. I have a wife and four children, the eldest of which is nine years old; and they are dependent on me for support and clothing. I likewise beg leave to state, that within the last two years my family have been so reduced as to be forced to seek the aid of the parish . . . I am in debt to several persons, making in the whole a considerable sum. There is no house to my chapel; and having no furniture, I am under the necessity of living in furnished apartments. I have no private property of any kind whatever; and if the excellent society can do any thing for me, it will be most gratefully received."

2. "I have a wife and nine children; eight dependent upon me, and a curacy of fifty pounds per annum . . . I lost, last May, three head of cattle, value 20*l*. and upwards, and I have paid another 20*l* for corn, to support my family. I cannot but admire the Lord's great care of me at that pinching period; and bowed down with urgent necessities, I can testify, from grateful experience, that I have been repeatedly extricated out of my difficulties, and my gloomy prospects have been dissipated by the beneficent and charitable aid of your benevolent society."

3. "Having been kindly advised to state my circumstances for the consideration of the Committee of your very important institution, I beg to send you the answers required . . . My total income is twenty-five pounds per annum. I have no other certain or occasional source. I have a wife and one child; but owing to my contracted circumstances, I have not been able to do any thing for them for the last four months; and, much to my regret, Mrs. ——— has been obliged to be with her own friends. We have a congregation of from five to six hundred at one church, and from four to five hundred at the other. The sacrament is administered eight times in the year. It is in contemplation to build a national school, which I have no doubt will be effected. We have a charity school and a Sunday school of about two hundred children."

4. "My whole income from the church is only twenty pounds per annum, with the surplice fees, which do not amount to five pounds per annum . . . I have no other income but the donations I receive from Messrs. ———, ———, ———, and ———'s benefactions. I have a wife and six children, four of whom are depen-

dent upon me for support . . . If the worthy Committee should be pleased to grant my petition, and afford their kind assistance, great will be the consolation to me and my poor family; and I hope the help will be applied to the furtherance of the cause of Him, who 'though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor.'"

5. "I am the curate of ——— and ———, for each of which I receive a salary of sixty pounds, and I have no other source of income. It was my intention to establish a school; but I am now precluded from that by a most melancholy circumstance. My dear wife is now in a very distressing state . . . she is a most pitiable object. . . . My family consists of six besides myself. I have to keep a horse, and pay about fifteen pounds per annum for taxes. Thus I am in great affliction, and I really know not how to go on any longer, without applying for the kind assistance of your benevolent society. I have in general large congregations, considering the size of the parishes. Most of the people appear glad to hear the preaching of the Gospel; but I fear there are but few who are seriously affected by it. I have two Sunday schools, which I superintend, and I hope some good is doing among the children."

6. "I beg leave to apply to the Society, and to state that I am at present in very distressed circumstances. I have a growing family; and though, together with the discharge of my parish duties, I teach the parish school, in order to procure a subsistence, the whole produce of my earnings does not exceed sixty pounds. . . . I have a wife and four children. The congregation consists of about 400, and the communicants are 200."

7. "Having been appointed to the curacy of ———, stipend fifty pounds a year. . . . I am much distressed as to my temporal circumstances. I have a wife and four children, who are totally dependent on me for their maintenance; and if it is the will of my gracious Father to enable me, I should be particularly happy giving the two eldest a little country education. I have a twelve-month's rent unpaid, which is ten pounds, and my landlord insists upon immediate payment; but I am at a loss to know where to turn my dejected face. . . . I solemnly assure you, I have all my life observed the strictest economy; and that should you condescend to vote me a small relief, I shall endeavour to use it to the glory of God, and the comfort of my poor family."

VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

FOREIGN.

THE calamitous occurrences of the last month have come so thickly upon us, as to preclude more than a transient mention.

France is again threatened with some of the troubles from which, we had hoped, she was beginning to emerge. The duke de Berri, the nephew of the king and heir presumptive to the throne, was assassinated on leaving the Opera-house on Sunday (*Sunday!*) the 13th February. The motives which led to this inhuman deed are not yet very clearly ascertained. The assassin at first persisted in asserting that he had no accomplices in his crime; and that the deed was prompted by his own personal hatred of the Bourbon race, for the injuries they had inflicted on France, and his desire to rid France of their yoke. Subsequent examinations have, however, given reason for apprehending that this assassination may have been the effect of an extensive plot. Nothing certain, however, is known on the subject. In the mean time, the count de Cazes, the prime minister of France, has been assailed with such vehemence by what is called the ultra royalist party, as having, by his line of policy, paved the way for this assassination, that he has been induced to withdraw from office. He had been confined to his house, for some time, by serious indisposition; and this is assigned, in the royal ordonnance, as the cause of his resignation, although there is little doubt that this is only the ostensible motive. The king, however, in order to testify his own unabated confidence in this minister, has created him a duke, and has appointed him ambassador to England to bear the condolence of the French king, on the death of George III. in the room of the duke de Richelieu, who had been charged with this mission, but who is now appointed to the post of prime minister, vacated by M. de Cazes. We cannot pretend to disentangle the present maze of French politics, or assign motives either for the ministerial changes which are taking place, or for the sad catastrophe which appears more immediately to have led to them. Time will, doubtless, throw light on both. In the mean time, laws have been proposed for placing the periodical press under more severe restraints, under an idea that its excessive freedom has brought about the late calamity; and for

altering the present mode of electing the chamber of deputies, so as to render it somewhat more aristocratical in its texture.

Though nearly a month has elapsed since the arrival of the intelligence of an extensive insurrectionary movement in the Spanish army collected at Cadiz, with a view to its embarkation for South America, we are still without any authentic details respecting the state and progress of the insurrection. Every avenue of intelligence appears to have been carefully blocked up by the vigilance of the Spanish government. The insurrection, however, is certainly very formidable, though, as yet, it seems to have been entirely military, and to have embraced a part only, though, without doubt, a very considerable part, of the army. A royalist force has been drawn together under General Freyer, and is said to have approached the insurgent army now stationed—their friends say *entrenched*, their enemies *blockaded*—in the Isle de Leon, a short distance from Cadiz. Whatever may be the issue of these movements, as it respects the parties immediately engaged in them, we may confidently predict very beneficial effects to arise from them to the cause of South American Independence.

DOMESTIC.

We now turn homewards, not to announce what all our readers full well know, but to lament with them over the tomb of our revered Sovereign, who resigned his earthly crown, we trust, for a crown of righteousness and eternal glory, at thirty-five minutes past eight in the evening of January 29, 1820. The occurrence had been long anticipated, and, under all the circumstances of the case, was to himself at least, we would trust, a really "happy release." The circumstance of the Duke of Kent lying dead at the time, added greatly to the general sympathy.—Truly death has reaped a fearful harvest within our palaces! No age, no sex has escaped. The Princess Charlotte, in the bloom of youth, two royal infants, the Duke of Kent in the vigour of unexhausted manhood, and our revered King and Queen in the feebleness of old age, have all been swept away within little more

than two years; and have left a lesson which we trust may not speedily be forgotten, of the uncertainty of all human expectations, the impotence of rank, the vanity of riches, the precariousness of youth and health, the feebleness of manhood, and the importance, to all classes and all ages, of preparing to meet their God, and making the salvation of their soul their chief object of anxiety in this fleeting and probationary world.

The close of one reign, and the commencement of another, seem naturally to invite us to consider the Divine claims on our gratitude for the past, and to reflect upon some of the lessons which it becomes us to learn for the future.

With regard to the former of these points, we are inclined to place in the foremost ground the personal character of our late revered monarch. In every country, the character of the Sovereign moulds, to a considerable extent, that of the people; and it is impossible that the late king could have swayed the sceptre of these realms for nearly sixty years, during which period he saw two successive generations grow up around him, emulous to obtain his favour, and to imitate his example, without having, to a considerable extent, given a tone to the opinions and manners of the age. A variety of anecdotes have been fondly related, to illustrate his virtuous qualities. We shall not think it necessary to transcribe these at present, especially as, by means of the newspapers, they are now very generally known throughout the kingdom. It is pleasing to observe, that most of these traits of personal history have reflected credit on his moral and religious character; and the anxiety with which they have been collected, and the avidity with which they have been perused, at once mark the moral feeling of the country, and prove it to be the true policy, if there were no higher obligation, of a British Sovereign to cultivate habits of Christian piety and virtue. It will long be remembered, to the praise of our deceased Monarch, and for the edification of posterity, that one feature which particularly endeared him to his subjects, and which has called forth so widely their eulogies and their regrets, was his attention to the external duties of religion.

The late King was not one of those characters who will shine emblazoned in the

page of history for exploits of arms or projects of ambition. His was a milder radiance than that of the conqueror. He peculiarly excelled in the virtues which have been considered as characterizing a British gentleman. His affection and virtuous anxiety as a father; his tenderness and fidelity as a husband; his temperance in the gratifications of the table; his abstinence from the giddy dissipations of a court; his punctuality and despatch in all affairs of business; his exemplary regularity in his hours and his habits;—these and other equally valuable, though unostentatious, qualities, have been often and justly eulogized. His amusements were as simple as those of a private individual: he asked for no expensive gratifications, and much less did he copy the evil example which prevailed at some of the courts of Europe at his accession, and which ultimately led the way for the downfall of a neighbouring kingdom. Music, agriculture, and active exercise, were his favourite recreations; and he appears never to have been more happy than when unbending from the cares of state in the domestic repose of his family. That he was not deficient in personal courage was proved on numerous occasions, particularly when attempts were made to take his life. His inflexible conscientiousness of principle led him more than once to oppose, and with success, the earnest solicitations of his advisers, when he thought that their plans interfered with the welfare of his subjects, or his own oath and duty as king. Yet no man bore his faculties more meekly, and his humility and condescension endeared him to all with whom he had occasion to converse. As he was conscientious himself, he respected the rights of conscience in others; and was remarkable for his laudable anxiety to maintain the civil and religious privileges of his subjects. He adhered faithfully to his pledge that no person in his dominions should suffer persecution for conscience's sake. Though a warm advocate for the Established Church himself, he lived and died beloved by his Dissenting and Roman Catholic subjects not less than by the members of his own church; and, by his example and conduct, he doubtless had a great share in maintaining a degree of comparative pacification among different religious sects; previously, perhaps, unknown in this country. He was a truly patriot king: his love for his country was conspicuous in all his conduct, public and private, and he enjoyed in return the rich-

est reward which a British Monarch can require—the affections of a free and loyal people. At the time of the French Revolution, and when many of his misguided subjects were desiring a similar convulsion at home, he has been known to weep over their infatuation, and to say that it was not for his own sake, but for theirs, that he felt so deeply affected at their conduct.

His devotional habits heightened and adorned his other qualities. It would be difficult, in the whole course of British history, to find a sovereign who shewed more profound veneration for religion, or greater regularity and fervour in his attendance upon the public ministrations of the church. He is stated to have been much attached to the writings of some of our best divines; and his general conduct shewed how sincerely he venerated Him who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. It would be superfluous to collect particular incidents illustrative of this point, when his whole life, and especially his humble behaviour and earnest devotion in public worship, were a constant commentary upon the state of his mind in approaching his Creator. He appears to have been also a firm believer in the Divinity of our Lord, and in the necessity and merits of his all-sufficient Atonement.

Surely, then, the personal character of such a Monarch is a powerful claim on our gratitude to God. By his influence, and that of his revered queen, the British court became the purest in Europe. Our very satyrists could find nothing worse to say than that his Majesty was too pious to be a king, and too virtuous to lead a court.

The prolongation of his life was also a blessing of considerable magnitude. He lived through and survived a period of unexampled peril to all our most cherished institutions, civil and ecclesiastical; and, by his influence, contributed greatly to the internal securities of this country, while almost every other European power was shaken to its foundation. When we look back at the events of his reign, we cannot but fear that there were periods in which his demise might have produced very dangerous consequences. The change of power, especially in turbulent times, is always more or less hazardous. We have, therefore, reason to bless God for his late Majesty's protracted reign, and that his sceptre has been peaceably transmitted to his successor. In this view, even the painful circumstances which rendered the

late King, for several of his last years, unable to conduct in person the affairs of the country, may not have been without their use in smoothing the way for a new reign. The crown has in consequence devolved upon one already accustomed to hold the reins of government, and who actually held them at the time, and whose line of policy had previously been chosen and acted upon. The gracious providence of God has thus relieved us from the apprehension of those hazards and changes to which a new reign so often gives rise, and which the annals of our own country prove to have been often productive of fatal consequences.

Nor are these the only claims upon our gratitude to Him by whom kings reign and princes decree justice. It is true, that there have been wars and discords; and that our sins as a nation have justly provoked, in many instances, the wrath of God against us: yet, amidst all, we may pronounce the late reign eminently auspicious. Our commerce has been increased, our territories have been extended, and our rank among the nations of the earth raised to a pitch of unexampled elevation. Our court has been conspicuous for its comparative morality, and the nation at large for their increased attention to the duties of religion. The benefits of education have been far more widely diffused; and it deserves remark, that their late Majesties were among the earliest patrons of a more extended education of the poor, especially in the case of Sunday schools. The progress of benevolent exertion of every kind has been also very great; and there was scarcely any species of charity that did not derive countenance from the crown. An increased attention to the privileges and comforts of the subject has been also very conspicuous. The unrivalled purity and impartiality of our public tribunals, caused no doubt, in a considerable measure, by the judges being rendered independent of the crown, deserves a large share of national gratitude to God; in connexion with which, it may be mentioned, that during the late reign, fewer persons have suffered capital punishment for offences against the state, than perhaps was ever the case in a like period of our history. Other topics, such as the improved moral character of our army and navy, and the preservation of these realms from invasion, when almost all others were exposed to that evil, if not subjected also to conquest, deserve our humble acknowledgments to the Author of all good. The abolition of the slave-trade, and the efforts

to extend Christianity throughout the world, are also among our many motives to thankfulness. And, to add but one instance more, the improved character of our clergy, and the increase of genuine religion in the church, are blessings which justly demand, that the long reign which has now closed, should not be forgotten in the annals of a grateful country.

With regard to our duties to the royal successor, we think it highly important, in times like these, to impress the obligation of transferring our allegiance with true loyalty and sincerity of heart. The duties of the Christian to constituted authorities do not waver with every breath of popular applause or dislike. "By ME kings reign." Our duty to our sovereign is founded upon our duty to God. A sense of this duty will prevent our indulging a captious and discontented spirit, or transferring the petty scandal of private life into our public conduct, as men and Christians. We need scarcely urge the apostolic duty of praying for our monarch, especially at a time like the present.—The first month of the new reign has not been calculated to increase our envy for the honours of a crown. The severe illness of the king, at the very time when his father and brother lay unburied, was a monitory lesson to himself, and to us all, of the frailness of the tenure by which we hold every earthly enjoyment. To add to this, a question has occurred, deeply affecting his domestic happiness. This

question is said to have been for the present laid at rest by the determination of ministers not to bring forward the subject in a judicial form, and the king has acquiesced in this determination.—To complete the occurrences of the month, a plot has been discovered, having for its alleged object the assassination of all the cabinet ministers. Nine of the conspirators were seized, armed, in an obscure apartment, near the Edgeware-road, in the north-west extremity of London, after a desperate resistance, in which one of the officers was killed, and several were wounded. Thistlewood, who struck the fatal blow, and who is regarded as the ringleader, escaped, but was seized the next day; and several more have since been apprehended. But, late as it now is in the month, it will be impossible for us to add any farther details to this brief notice of the providential defeat of a most alarming conspiracy, which might have produced results of the most disastrous kind.

Surely, under circumstances like these, the duty of every Christian is clear; and the ensuing election will give a favourable opportunity of practising this duty, by selecting men who are neither the tools of a faction, nor mere aspirants for the honours or emoluments of office, but who have given, or are willing to give, adequate pledges of unshaken loyalty, combined with a conscientious zeal for the religion, morals, and public welfare of their country.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. Y. S. was too late for our present Number, but will appear in the next; as will also the *Obituaries of Col. Trotter, of Palamcotta, and J. M. Wallace, Esq. of New Jersey.* We fully agree with AMICUS in his censure of the language of certain Advertisements, and have repeatedly expressed our opinion on this very point.

E. J. V. P.; S. E. R.; CREDENS; AN INQUIRING CHRISTIAN; J. B. O. C.; and IMPARTIAL, are under consideration.

We can give no pledge to A. B. C. till we see his papers.

The letter of the *Curates' Committee* did not reach us till after the date mentioned for the return of their paper. We await their further directions.

We are glad to find that we were mistaken as to the drift of PHILODOXUS's letter; which, he states, was not to deny "the ineffable union of Deity with the human soul of the Mediator," but only to guard against "what in the fifth century would have been condemned as the Eutychian heresy."

We are much obliged to H., but have been somewhat afraid of wearying our readers with too much even on an interesting subject. We have not, however, forgotten this or his more recent paper.

A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, in his censure upon the management of briefs, should not be angry with us respecting them. We are totally at a loss to know upon what he grounds his supposition of our being so perfectly satisfied with the present system.